

# CALIFORNIA JOURNAL OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT AND NEWS NOTES

### THIS ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL

This issue of the *California Journal of Elementary Education* is second in a series of four planned to consider the instructional program for grades seven and eight. The August issue reported the survey made in 455 elementary school districts in California, presented material concerning the professional background of teachers, and described how one district implemented a soundly conceived educational philosophy through the development of its building program.

The current issue continues the general theme of "Instruction in Grades Seven and Eight" through reports of visits made in 57 school districts. Helen Heffernan, Chief of the Bureau of Elementary Education, Robert E. Browne, Consultant in Curriculum Development, and Bernard L. Lonsdale, Lorene E. Marshall, Afton Dill Nance, and Ester Nelson, consultants in elementary education, visited 57 elementary school districts enrolling pupils in grades seven and eight. They visited classrooms and met with pupils, teachers, and administrators.

The article "The Young Adolescent" provides insight into the practical problems of teaching and living with thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds. The point of view expressed provides the basis and sets the stage for the other articles in the issue.

"Organization for Instruction in Selected Seventh and Eighth Grades" describes how the 57 schools visited organized to meet the needs of the young adolescents in their care. The report reflects a variety of practices. School districts have found many different answers to the question "How should grades seven and eight be organized?"

The article entitled "Characteristics of the Program, Grades Seven and Eight" describes the salient aspects of the curriculum in the schools observed and draws some conclusions regarding current interests and trends as they were revealed through the visits and conferences.

"Five Mornings in the Seventh Grade—A Sequence in Living and Learning" and "Sharing with the Neighbors—Promising Practices in Grades Seven and Eight" are based on practices which the observers regard as promising and which they recommend for general implemen-

tation in schools throughout the state. "Ambient Teachers: Instructional Effectiveness in Seventh and Eighth Grades" will interest many teachers. This report of a research study carried on in 38 classrooms merits careful attention.

The staff of the Office of the County Superintendent of Schools, Kings County, used the questionnaire forms provided for the state survey to study all of the schools which enrolled pupils in seventh and eighth grades. This study included material on small schools which is not included in other surveys. The data thus collected are presented in the article "Kings County Studies Its Seventh and Eighth Grades" and suggest the desirability of comparable studies in other counties.

The picture on the front cover was furnished through the courtesy of the Alameda County Curriculum Materials Center; pictures on the back cover through the courtesy of Starr King Elementary School, Arden-Carmichael Union School District, Sacramento County, and Hawthorne Elementary School District.

The focus of the February, 1960, issue of the *Journal* will be on guidance practices in grades seven and eight. The May issue will present material on parent and community relations.

#### EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

The 1959 revision of *Equipment and Supplies* lists materials and equipment which have been tested and approved for use with children by one of the seven test centers in the United States and Canada maintained by the Association for Childhood Education International. Material is tested and approved for preschool, school, and home.

Manufacturers are invited to send their materials to the test centers for examination and use. Then each article is actually used by children either in the classroom or around the school under careful observation.

The bulletin gives suggested lists of materials and equipment for use with children in nursery, kindergarten, primary, and intermediate schools, as well as in the home. The four A.C.E.I. standing committees dealing with these age levels have made careful study and revision of these lists.

Material in the bulletin is arranged for easy reference. In addition to the suggested lists for each school, approved items are listed by classification and name and address of the manufacturer. The age level for which it is suitable is also given. An alphabetical index of all items by

common and trade or brand names is included. This 100-page bulletin is available from the Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 Fifteenth Street, N.W., Washington 5, D. C., at a price of \$1.50.

#### HOW GOOD IS OUR KINDERGARTEN?

*How Good Is Our Kindergarten*, the newest bulletin of the American Association of Childhood Education International, is the work of the Association's special committee on the kindergarten. Lorraine Sherer, Associate Professor of Education, University of California, Los Angeles, is the author.

This 35-page bulletin, a guide for teaching five-year-olds, gives standards for judging a kindergarten. Outstanding leaders in the fields of child growth and development and kindergarten education from many parts of the United States have reviewed and recommended it.

Such subjects as the following are discussed:

What is a kindergarten?

Who goes to kindergarten?

What is a good kindergarten for five-year-olds?

Inducting each child with maximum assurance and minimum emotional upset

Inducting each child gradually into group living

How many children make one kindergarten?

What kind of educational program is best suited for five-year-olds?

Helping each child to learn to think

Allowing time to develop self-dependence and beginnings of good study habits

Providing out-of-door activities

Helping each child to expand his knowledge, to be well informed, to learn how to get and use information

Developing language as a satisfying means of communication and expression

Providing aesthetic experiences

Providing space, equipment, and materials for good learning activities

Does the kindergarten have a good teacher?

Does the kindergarten have resources and support needed to be a good kindergarten?

The publication is available from the Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 Fifteenth Street, N.W., Washington, 5, D. C.

## NEW PUBLICATION AIDS OUTDOOR EDUCATION

The State Department of Natural Resources, through its Conservation Education Section, has recently published a 32-page booklet which is entitled *Natural Areas for Schools*. The author is Verna R. Johnston, Biology Co-ordinator at Stockton College. This teaching aid is designed to show how natural areas can be acquired and used in effective teaching. The booklet is illustrated by Ernest Maxwell, artist and outdoor education expert from Idyllwild.

Copies can be secured by writing to the Supervisor of Conservation Education, State Office Building No. 1, Sacramento 14, California.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION*Attendance Accounting in California Public Schools, 1959 Edition.*

Compiled by E. R. Deering, Consultant, Child Welfare and Attendance. Bureau of Administrative Services, California State Department of Education. Business Administration Publication No. 5. Bulletin of the California State Department of Education, Vol. XXVIII, No. 6, September, 1959, Pp. xii + 124.

The 1959 edition of *Attendance Accounting in California Public Schools* incorporates the changes in methods and procedures of school attendance accounting that have resulted from legislation enacted in 1959. It is the purpose of this bulletin to give information concerning the laws and regulations relating to the recording and reporting of pupil attendance to public school administrators and others who have the responsibility for attendance accounting and to suggest procedures that will lead to a reasonable degree of conformity in attendance accounting throughout the state. The bulletin deals with attendance accounting at all levels. Chapters II through VI deal with admissions, attendance forms, types of attendance, and procedures for recording and reporting attendance from kindergarten through junior college. Other chapters deal with emergency schools, compulsory education and continuation education, physically handicapped minors, absence due to illness or quarantine, and miscellaneous provisions relating to attendance.

Copies have been distributed to county, city, and district superintendents of schools and to all secondary school principals and to attendance supervisors. Additional copies will be furnished on request to city and district superintendents of schools for use by elementary school principals and members of their central administrative staff who may need them.

## THE YOUNG ADOLESCENT

HELEN HEFFERNAN, *Chief, Bureau of Elementary Education,  
California State Department of Education, and*  
MAXINE SMITH, *Curriculum Consultant,  
San Bernardino County*

In California public schools approximately 198,000 boys and girls are enrolled in the seventh and eighth grades of elementary school districts. Over 225,000 are enrolled in grades seven and eight of school districts that maintain secondary schools. The majority of the latter organize their seventh, eighth, and ninth grades into junior high schools.

Boys and girls in the seventh and eighth grades are usually referred to as young adolescents. For most children, entrance into the seventh grade represents the end of childhood and the beginning of the period of youth. Beauchamp and Lane made the following statement regarding this change:

. . . look upon *early adolescence* as the time when the individual is *growing out of childhood*; *later adolescence* as the time when the individual is *growing into adulthood*.<sup>1</sup>

At this time boys and girls are in the process of stretching toward maturity—physically, socially, and intellectually. Certain characteristics make this age group different from other age groups.

Twice in the school life of a child a period of development occurs which is exceptionally rapid and in many ways most unusual. One of these periods takes place at the beginning and one at the end of the child's elementary school life—in kindergarten and at adolescence.

At both times a real unfoldment is observable, a readiness to gain insights of suddenly increased depth, a curiosity that knows no limits, a driving need to be a person in his world, to understand it and to have a respectable place in it. At the same time, the young adolescent needs support, understanding, respect, and outlets in a wide variety of expressional forms.

<sup>1</sup> Howard Lane and Mary Beauchamp. *Understanding Human Development*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959, p. 303.

More than 130 years ago, Frederick Froebel expressed his philosophical conclusions about the nature and needs of growing human organisms in the following terms:

We grant space and time to young plants and animals because we know that, in accordance with the laws that live in them, they will develop properly and grow well . . . but the human young is looked upon as a piece of wax, a lump of clay, which man can mold into what he pleases.<sup>3</sup>

The child should from the time of his birth be viewed in accordance with his nature, treated correctly, and given the free all-sided use of his power.<sup>3</sup>

The child, the boy, the man, should have no other endeavor but to be at every stage of development wholly what this stage calls for.<sup>4</sup>

Froebel seems to have had an intuitive glimpse of much of our modern knowledge about the nature of human growth and development, the influence of environment on personality, the breadth and persistence of individual differences, the sequence of developmental tasks, and certain aspects of the learning process. Even then, he was seriously concerned with the prevalent fallacy that education could be poured into a child's mind like water into a pitcher.

The Twentieth Century has been a period of tremendous activity in scientific study and research. Although the preponderance of this research has been in the field of physical science, a sufficient amount has been done in the social sciences, particularly in psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology to deepen our understanding of human growth and development, individual variation, and the importance of interest and purpose on the part of the learner. Research has revealed new knowledge about basic needs and developmental tasks. And yet, in the upper grades particularly, we find a great deal of "pitcher filling."

In spite of the well-established findings of research, critics, pressure groups, and authors gain an audience when they urge education to disregard these psychological and educational findings and return to the practices of some never-never land of long ago in the treatment and education of youth. There is always a lag between what is known and what is fully put into practice—critics frequently advocate increasing the lag. Education must not be panicked into traditionalism. In approaching any educational decision, cautious school people will first

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Froebel, *Chief Educational Classics*. London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1912, pp. 32-33.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Froebel, *The Education of Man*. New York: A. Lovell & Co., 1885, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

investigate what research has to say regarding the problem. Thus they keep in position to resist the pressures to disregard individual differences, to revert to practices discarded long ago after extensive trial. By knowing the lessons that have been learned in education, school people avoid making the same mistakes in the education of each generation.

Of greatest danger, particularly to the young adolescent, is the "get-tough-with-the-kids" virus which seems to have infected many adults who at the same time are exceedingly chary of any efforts that might lessen *their* comfort and require *their* increased effort. Piling on more subject matter is not the solution to any educational problem and particularly not to the developmental problems of the young adolescent. He will soak up subject matter like a sponge if it meets his needs. The needs of young adolescents can be met to the extent that their teachers understand the adolescents, are skilled in guiding them on the basis of their natural drives to learning, and are richly prepared with the information and instructional materials needed to stimulate them.

#### PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The period of early adolescence is characterized by rapid bodily growth which produces a new type of physical maturity. Girls at thirteen years of age are near the peak of puberty and are growing rapidly. Since their pubertal growth period starts a year or two before that of boys, they tend to be larger than the boys in their classes. Some girls feel big and awkward and have difficulty getting used to their new physiques.

At the same age boys are just beginning their pubertal growth spurt. If their growth is delayed, they may begin to be worried because of their lack of weight and height. They watch their own bodies carefully for signs of maturity and compare themselves with their age mates. The smaller boys are likely to stay away from the girls, who seem to them almost adults in their maturity.

Frequently parents and teachers are unaware of the fact that faced with these physiological changes, many of the continuities in the life of the young adolescent are again being questioned. He is asking himself: How do I appear to others? Am I normal? Am I able to fill the new roles expected of me at home and at school? Can I meet the responsibilities of an occupation? Consciously or unconsciously, the young adolescent is searching for a new sense of continuity and identity.

In the following statement Robert J. Havinghurst points out the effect of physical development at this period.

During this period girls and boys alike are working at the developmental task of accepting their physiques. It is at this time that they learn what kind of a body they will have during the rest of their lives. If their body is a fashionable one in size and shape, they become proud of themselves and enter with self-confidence into the other tasks of growing up. However, if they discover that their bodies are unfashionable, they have the difficult task of accepting these bodies and making the most of them. The task is especially difficult for those who mature a year or two behind the average of the group. They begin to wonder if they are "normal."<sup>\*</sup>

The effect of these physical changes on the personality of the young adolescent is of tremendous import. A perceptive teacher will note the big girl who retreats to the side lines and pretends indifference to the social life of her peers. The teacher will also be aware of all kinds of compensatory behavior that may emerge to bolster the uncertain boy who is beginning to fear that he may not be heavy enough to play football or tall enough to play basketball. Most of the impulsiveness, irritability, and turmoil of early adolescence has its origin in the physical unbalance of the period.

The picture of the young adolescent is not all dark, however. For the boy and girl who experience these bodily changes at the usual time and who have been reassured that their development is normal, the period of storm and stress is likely to be less severe and of shorter duration. Such children settle more easily into the stability and responsibility of later adolescence.

The young person is fortified to meet his own problems when he understands that each individual grows physically at his own rate in height, weight, breadth, and in the development of primary and secondary sex characteristics. In some cases, the spurt in height and weight is responsible for poor posture. It is not unusual to see a seventh or eighth grade boy who is very tall walking to school with another boy from the same grade who is very short. There is evidence that the hearts of some individuals have not developed rapidly enough to keep pace with the unusual growth of bodies and limbs and that fainting and dizziness often occur. Some of the rapid growers appear awkward and show a temporary decrease in speed and co-ordination. They are quite susceptible to colds, headaches, and digestive disturbances.

<sup>\*</sup> Robert J. Havinghurst. "Poised at the Crossroads of Life." *The School Review*, LXI (September, 1953), 330.

All in all, the period from twelve to fourteen is not the most pleasant one either for the adolescent or for the adults who guide him. The latter probably recall the golden age when the child was ten or look hopefully ahead to the seriousness and stability of the sixteen-year-old. Because he is living it, vigorously and even painfully, the young adolescent is too preoccupied with his present life to recall the wide-open receptivity and respect for his elders that very likely characterized him at ten, nor can he foresee a happier time ahead. To him, this is life, a struggle to achieve independence, to find his place in his social world sometimes against what he considers systematic adult thwartings. Fortunately, memory is selective; the most unpleasant experiences of life are those most likely to be forgotten. With understanding guidance, the boy or girl can weather through without scars and may not even recall the storm.

#### MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

Although wide differences in mental ability characterize any unselected group of young adolescents, many boys and girls have reached a stage in mental development that makes it possible for them to participate in adult activities. They can read newspapers and current magazines with interest and understanding; they can make purchases successfully; they can use various means of transportation. They can enjoy adult forms of recreation.

Their conceptions of time and space have become more accurate. They can grasp the reality of the physical world. They are beginning to deepen their understanding of social relationships and to see the cause-and-effect sequence.

The young adolescent will not learn for the sake of learning. He must see a relationship between what he is asked to learn and his own interests or needs. The successful teacher is one who can stimulate the interest and curiosity of boys and girls and is ready to follow their expressed needs and purposes. Learning will take place only in a climate of mutual acceptance and respect, one which makes ample provision for individual differences in ability, interests, and needs. No group of young adolescents will march abreast down standardized roads to learning.

The environment must be rich, stimulating, and constantly changing as the boys and girls progress. There must be many opportunities to think critically, to solve problems, to develop individual and group interests, to make comparisons, to make associations with past experiences, to make choices.

In this changing world, the method by which boys and girls arrive at a conclusion is as important as the conclusion itself. For who can say how long the facts accepted today will continue to be true? The needs of young adolescents are met chiefly in the process rather than in the accumulation of specific facts. No one can predict the specific problems the future holds for any young person. His only reliable equipment is in the problem-solving techniques, the scientific attitudes and methods, the intellectual integrity with which he has learned to face genuine situations.

The young adolescent needs opportunity to deal with problems that are real and meaningful to him. As he reads the paper, talks with his peers, and listens to adults, the world and its affairs are of concern to him. He is shaping his beliefs and determining his values.

The young adolescent will read widely and satisfy his own particular interests. His environment should make a program of self-selected reading available to him through appropriate collections of reading material in the school library and in easily accessible public libraries. His school should be sure he knows of all the cultural resources of the community—museums, galleries, industrial exhibits.

A highly productive mental characteristic of early adolescence is emerging interest in the classification of knowledge. The young adolescent wants to bring order out of what he knows about mathematics. He is ready to systematize his knowledge of science—his physical world. This is a clue to the educational program on which the young adolescent will thrive. The program should provide opportunity for him to consolidate what he has learned into some sort of systematic categories. It should provide him opportunity to explore many different kinds of activities so that he may discover new interests and aptitudes. Self-discovery is one of the most significant outcomes of the years in which the young person is testing himself against the ideas of his peers and the adults in his environment and in all kinds of situations with all kinds of materials.

#### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Above all, the years of early adolescence are years when sociability looms large. Boys and girls spend as much time in a group as possible. At the beginning of the period, youth of one sex form most of the groups, but toward the end of the period a mixed sex group is desired at least for part of the time and for certain activities.

Group discussions and telephone conversations are endless. An adult who has good rapport with young people understands the necessity for much conversation among young adolescents as they strive to project their personalities on others in order to see them reflected and clarified. They discover the extent to which their ideas, attitudes, and values are acceptable or unacceptable to their peers and can then modify them or find a defensible basis for maintaining them.

As life in our society grows more complex, it becomes increasingly difficult for young people to identify with it. Whenever an individual has strong and persistent doubts concerning his identity, aberrant behavior is not uncommon. If handled with understanding and sympathy, unsocial and even delinquent behavior need have no permanent effect on personality. In the school organization, some teacher should have considerable knowledge of each individual in order to help him understand the problems with which young people are usually confronted. An understanding adult can help the young adolescent to realize that it is normal to become over-identified with certain heroes or cliques and in the process actually to lose his identity as a person. The "crowd" has genuine values in the young person's social development, but he should realize that the independence he is striving to acquire can actually be lost if group acceptance is secured at the price of complete domination by the "gang" or a hero figure in the "gang."

The guidance-centered school seems to offer the best organization for the social development of young people. In such a school, a qualified teacher is assigned to a group of young adolescents for a long enough portion of the school day to have opportunity to know the strengths and problems of individual pupils sufficiently well to give effective assistance in meeting the inescapable problems of the adolescent in the process of growing up.

This assignment of teachers has implications for decisions concerning class size, organization of curriculum, cumulative pupil personnel records and individual parent-teacher-pupil conferences. A guidance-centered school recognizes the teacher in the key role as counselor. However, the teacher cannot fill this role with confidence and success unless an adequate staff of medical, psychological, and even psychiatric personnel is available for consultation. The very nature of physical, mental, and social development during adolescence points to the strategic importance of guidance oriented teachers supported and rein-

forced by the most highly trained technical consultation service obtainable.

#### YOUNG ADOLESCENTS ARE BUSY PEOPLE

During the years of early adolescence, boys and girls alike are constantly working on their developmental tasks of getting along with age mates of their own and the opposite sex and of learning and "trying on" their masculine or feminine roles. To adults, they seem to be wasting time that might more profitably be devoted to neglected household tasks, to studying, or to earning money to meet the increasing demands they are making on the family exchequer. Because of these differences in opinion about what is and what is not worth while, the young adolescent sometimes becomes antagonistic to parents and teachers. As the developmental tasks are accomplished by girls when they are about fifteen and boys when they are about sixteen, the conflicts lessen, and the respect of boys and girls for adults is restored; they become more stable, and parents frequently express relief because they have "settled down."

Because of the many and significant changes that occur during early adolescence, this is of necessity a busy period. The school day is filled with a crowded curriculum. Boys and girls are solving complex problems in mathematics. They are extending their ability to communicate through wider reading, speech arts, dramatic productions, and their school newspaper and annual. They are studying the history of their country and other countries of the world and are comparing historic events with the dramatic events of the current scene. They are also learning about the scientific world. They are engaged in an active sports program before and after school and during the physical education period. They are learning new skills in home and industrial arts and are organizing and consolidating what they have learned. School days are busy days with a curriculum that is in constant danger of becoming too heavy because of expanding societal demands.

The out-of-school demands on the young adolescent add to the pressures upon him. Because of his size, his parents may make more demands for responsibility in household tasks. Music lessons, dancing lessons, and swimming lessons need to be fitted into a crowded weekly schedule. Youth organizations require many hours on Saturdays and Sundays. Recreational activities become increasingly attractive—favorite programs on TV, hi-fi records, interesting library books, and hobbies make their bid for the limited out-of-school time available.

Here, again, the need of wise adult guidance is evident. The young person needs a well-balanced life. He must grow in power to make wise choices among the many activities clamoring for his interest. The adults responsible for the guidance of young adolescents should never disregard their major developmental tasks or prematurely force upon them adult responsibilities. At one time, the young adolescent is a dependent child with a need for the security adults can give and moments later he has resumed his struggle to establish himself as an independent person with negative attitudes toward parents and teacher accompanied by a show of bravado. This period of ambivalence continues throughout the twelve- to fourteen-year period. Changes in the young individual do not take place overnight, but the best hope lies in the richness and depth of experiences the young person has in his school and out-of-school life and the selfless devotion of parents and teachers who know that the promised land of maturity lies just ahead.

#### YOUNG ADOLESCENTS HAVE DREAMS AND AMBITIONS

The hope of attaining the promised land lies in the ideal image everyone has of himself—the image of the person he would like to be. The ideal image a child has of himself goes through a considerable evolution. The young child identifies with the parent of the same sex, and very flattering to the father is his son's desire to be "just like Daddy." At about ten, however, Daddy is likely to be replaced by the baseball pitcher, the movie star, the television hero. The boy wants to be powerful and glamorous. But by thirteen and fourteen, he has begun to accept the fact that these characters are distant, inaccessible, and unrealistic in terms of what he has come to accept as within the realm of possibility for him, and he begins to think of some attractive young adult whom he knows.

The importance of the quality of adults with whom the young adolescent is associated can hardly be overestimated. He will observe this person day-by-day and week-by-week. He watches this attractive person's behavior in work and play. He may imitate the voice quality, speech mannerisms, manner of walking or posture of the neighbor, teacher, club leader, or church worker to whom he is attracted. The young adolescent is in the process of developing a new ideal image, a code of values for his own life. He is working on his developmental task of developing a philosophy of life for himself. The model or models he has chosen will influence greatly his goals, his dreams, his

aspirations, and the vigor with which he sets about translating them into reality.

#### THE YOUNG ADOLESCENT MUST BELONG

Although the young adolescent may normally evince distant and even hostile behavior toward his parents, he has great need to know that they are always available to help when he has made mistakes in his awkward attempts to be independent of them and to be grown up.

Parents may do irreparable damage to their child at this period in his life if they endeavor to dominate every situation. The young adolescent realizes that he is physically and economically dependent. Parents may exercise final authority; they may determine how he will spend his time, what friends he will have, how he will cut his hair, what clothes he will wear. The more dominant the parents the more likely the child will yield because it is more comfortable, but if he yields in achieving his developmental task of independence he will not grow up.

The young adolescent continues to need to belong to his family in every way possible. But understanding parents will not be too unyielding. They know that growing up means pushing out one's freedom of action. They will set the limits for the protection of the young person, but they will patiently explain the region of freedom which remains for him and the reasons why limits are protective and not a mere expression of parental authority. His role in his home is changing. The goal of wise parents is to envision this new role as that of a friendly independent adult who accepts full membership in a family group in which the only restrictions placed on his freedom are the self-imposed limitations of love and respect.

Teachers know that the same problems confronting the young adolescent in his home and family relations apply to his school. He needs to belong to his school. In every class, young people need increasing opportunity to take responsibilities for planning their school work, for carrying on independent study and investigations, for carrying on a wide variety of school activities. Again, the faculty of a school does not relinquish all responsibilities. A school democracy is a government under law. But young people can participate genuinely in the making of the laws which assure a good life for people who choose to live by them.

The one thing that young adolescents want more than anything else is to grow up. The parents or teachers who work most effectively with

them show their awareness of this by treating them as they would treat other adults. No child will go through the years of thirteen and fourteen without distress to himself and to his adult guides. No amount of effort, time, and patience should be spared in putting to work at home and at school what we know about human development during this critical period, because in the rocky soil of adolescence lie the seeds awaiting only the proper nurture to burgeon in a happy productive adult life.

## ORGANIZATION FOR INSTRUCTION IN SELECTED SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADES

ROBERT E. BROWNE, *Consultant in Curriculum Development,  
California State Department of Education*

During the 1958-59 school year, 57 elementary school districts enrolling seventh and eighth grade pupils were visited by staff members of the Bureau of Elementary Education to secure information regarding the organization that was being employed for instruction, curriculum, guidance, and for developing and maintaining home-school relationships. The districts visited were representative of the more than 300 elementary school districts in California that had 500 or greater average daily attendance during the 1956-57 school year.

In selecting the districts to be visited, various factors were considered. Districts that had schools with small and those that had large enrollments in each of the geographic areas were included as well as districts in which varying structures of instructional organization were employed. In some cases, two or more school districts in the same county were included.

The districts were divided into five groups according to average daily attendance. The names of the districts in each group and the counties in which they are located follow:

### Group I: 500 to 1,000 average daily attendance

Westside Elementary, Fresno  
Lakeport Union Elementary, Lake  
Herlong Elementary, Lassen  
Alturas Elementary, Modoc  
Loomis Union Elementary, Placer  
Ripon Elementary, San Joaquin  
Cloverdale Union Elementary, Sonoma  
Newman Elementary, Stanislaus  
Corning Union Elementary, Tehama  
Live Oak Elementary, Sutter

Sonora Elementary, Tuolumne  
Winters Elementary, Yolo  
Ella Elementary, Yuba

Group II: 1,001 to 2,000 average daily attendance

Gridley Union Elementary, Butte  
Crescent Union Elementary, Del Norte  
Orland Joint Union Elementary, Glenn  
Willows Union Elementary, Glenn  
Arcata Elementary, Humboldt  
Bishop Union Elementary, Inyo  
Susanville Elementary, Lassen  
Chowchilla Elementary, Madera  
San Anselmo Elementary, Marin  
Hollister Elementary, San Benito  
Bloomington Elementary, San Bernardino  
Atascadero Elementary, San Luis Obispo  
Freedom Union Elementary, Santa Cruz  
Yreka Union Elementary, Siskiyou  
Red Bluff Union Elementary, Tehama  
Yuba Elementary, Sutter  
Placerville Union Elementary, El Dorado

Group III: 2,001 to 3,000 average daily attendance

Brawley Elementary, Imperial  
Delano Union Elementary, Kern  
Corcoran Union Elementary, Kings  
Ukiah Union Elementary, Mendocino  
Indio Elementary, Riverside  
Santa Maria Elementary, Santa Barbara  
Redding Elementary, Shasta  
Vaca Valley Union Elementary, Solano

Group IV: 3,001 to 4,000 average daily attendance

Mount Eden Elementary, Alameda  
Lafayette Elementary, Contra Costa  
Madera Elementary, Madera  
San Rafael City Elementary, Marin  
Tulare City Elementary, Tulare

**Group V: over 4,000 average daily attendance**

Merced City Elementary, Merced  
Ravenswood City Elementary, San Mateo  
Oxnard Elementary, Ventura  
Monterey City Elementary, Monterey  
Arden-Carmichael Union Elementary, Sacramento  
Ontario Elementary, San Bernardino  
La Mesa-Spring Valley Elementary, San Diego  
Campbell Union Elementary, Santa Clara  
Hayward Elementary, Alameda  
East Whittier City Elementary, Los Angeles  
Little Lake Elementary, Los Angeles  
Garden Grove Elementary, Orange  
Cajon Valley Union Elementary, San Diego

In order to secure uniform information about each of the districts visited a check list was devised for use by each of the six visitors. Information was collected regarding the number of classrooms maintained for grades seven and eight and special facilities such as shop rooms, libraries, and shower rooms. The first section of the check list was concerned with organization for instruction. The organization of elective programs or exploratory offerings was also studied as were student body functions and cocurricular or extracurricular activities.

Following the section on organization and curriculum, guidance factors were listed, including the bases used for assignment of pupils to classrooms and the provision made for academically talented and slow learners. Reporting practices were included in this section as well as factors relating to home-school relationships and community participation in educational planning.

Provision for pupil participation in the study was provided through the description of a regular school day to be written by boys and girls in both seventh and eighth grades. In some cases pupils were selected by their teachers to prepare this part of the report. In a few cases student body officers made the selection.

**PUPIL-TEACHER CONTACTS**

Closely related to the problem of classroom organization is that of teacher-pupil contacts. The following two questions were included in this category:

1. From how many teachers does a pupil receive instruction during the regular day?
2. How many children does a teacher meet during the regular day?

The answers to these questions necessarily depended on the type of classroom instructional program maintained and the size of the classes. The median number of teachers from whom boys and girls in seventh and eighth grades of schools of all sizes received instruction was 4.2. The smallest number of pupils taught by one teacher during the regular school day was 24 and the largest number 272. The median number of pupils taught by one teacher during a regular school day in schools of all sizes was 83.

#### CLASS SIZE IN GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT

Basic to a consideration of teacher load in terms of pupil-teacher contacts is average class size. The smallest class enrolled 24 boys and girls, the largest class 41. The average enrollment in seventh grade classes was slightly larger than in eighth grade classes. The median class size for grade seven was 34, for grade eight 32. Several schools reported physical education classes with as many as 46 children enrolled and choral groups with more than 40 enrolled. Class size, for purposes of this study, was determined on the basis of homeroom or core class enrollments.

Organizational procedures for instruction in the school districts follow many different plans. In the smallest schools self-contained classroom organization was most common, whereas complete departmentalization was most frequently employed by the largest schools. The size of the school seemed to be a relatively important factor in the determination of classroom organization.

A close parallel exists between the data reported on questionnaires returned from 455 seventh and eighth grade schools and those reported on the check list. The programs observed ranged from those offered in completely self-contained classrooms to those completely departmentalized, but the greatest per cent showed considerable variation between these two extremes. Only about 5 per cent of the schools maintained programs in which pupils spent their entire time with one teacher; 12 per cent maintained programs in which pupils spent each period with a different teacher. In 14 per cent of the schools, all periods except one were spent with the same teacher; in 43 per cent approximately half time was spent with one teacher. In 21 per cent of the schools

pupils spent two periods per day with the same teacher. The remaining 5 per cent reported other variations. A wide range of organization other than that listed in the five classifications on the check list was found. In general, the trend in instructional organization was toward the use of large blocks of time. This use of time provided opportunity for good guidance programs and a unified curriculum approach.

#### ORGANIZATION FOR TEACHING UNITS OF WORK

One question on the check list which elicited considerable discussion was concerned with techniques for presenting integrated learning experiences through organized units of work. The variety of responses to the question "What broad areas of life experience (units of work) are being taught?" included information about the scope of the social studies program and methods of organizing classroom work. Units were employed in approximately two-thirds of the social studies programs. A variety of techniques was employed in the other third.

Where no form of unit organization was employed, most seventh grade teachers used a geography approach which adhered closely to the state textbook. In the eighth grade programs historical approaches were used more frequently than geographical approaches, but in both the seventh and eighth grade programs the teachers expressed some difference of opinion regarding the emphasis. Some teachers stated their programs were of the survey type that covered Asia, Africa, and Europe in the seventh grade and United States history and government in the eighth grade. Others stated they employed depth studies of selected geographic or historic areas.

Universal concern was expressed at the seventh grade level for more and better resource materials and organized resource units that were available. It was indicated that more teachers than were doing so would organize integrated learning programs on a unit basis if adequate materials and organized plan units were available for their use.

#### TEACHING SEPARATE SUBJECTS

In completely departmentalized programs, the answer to the question "Do certain teachers teach a separate subject throughout the day?" was affirmative since the purpose of departmentalization is usually to permit specialization in the various subject areas.

Because the majority of seventh and eighth grades in California elementary school districts utilize a system in which pupils spend about

half of their time with one teacher and the remainder in departmentalized classes, a wide range of teacher specialization was found in subject areas other than those included in the core phase of the instructional program. Teachers of a single subject most usually taught music, physical education, industrial arts, or homemaking. A fairly large number of them taught mathematics or science. Every subject area included within the elementary school curriculum was mentioned at least once as being handled by one teacher on a departmentalized basis. In many instances expediency or some purely local condition was the determining factor in organizing subject areas for departmentalization.

Included in that portion of the school day taught by one teacher were various plans for unifying learning experiences. The most common practice was the inclusion of areas in social studies and language arts. A few schools taught separate classes in reading or literature, but the majority taught reading as a part of the unified studies programs, which were generally called core unified studies and basic class programs. Among the factors which influenced these programs were educational philosophy, degree of experience in operating integrated learning programs on the part of individual teachers, and the availability of useful teaching resources.

#### ELECTIVES AND EXPLORATORY OFFERINGS

In keeping with the general principle that exploratory experiences in a wide range of vocational and avocational interests should be provided for boys and girls in early adolescence, a large majority of elementary schools offered elective or exploratory programs in the seventh and eighth grades. Both the number of elective offerings and the number of periods per week devoted to them varied considerably from school to school. A few schools scheduled two periods for electives daily. However, the most common practice was to schedule one period daily for electives.

A total of 46 separate electives were offered by the 57 school districts studied. The greatest number of these were in the fields of music, arts, and crafts. More than 70 per cent of the schools offered instrumental or vocal music as an elective and 60 per cent some phase of arts and crafts. Certain schools offered as elective, subjects that other schools considered as part of the required program. For example, industrial arts and homemaking were electives in some schools and required subjects in others. A classified list of the various electives offered follows:

**Music, Arts, and Crafts**

Band	Instrumental music
Orchestra	Art
Chorus	Arts and crafts
Boys chorus	Crafts
Girls glee club	Handicrafts
Majorette	

**Prevocational**

Woodshop	Projection assistant
Electric shop	Girls shop
Sewing	Agriculture
Cooking	Home arts
Library assistant	

**Avocational**

Marionettes	Folk dancing
Dramatics	Recreational dancing
Athletics	

**Other**

Advanced mathematics	Spanish
Aviation	Year book
Typing	French
Story writing	History of California
Photography	Speech
Journalism	Anthropology
Study hall	Creative writing
Book club	World problems
Model club	Economics
Fundamental mathematics	Science

One experimental program was reported in which a required activity period for grades seven and eight was scheduled to replace an elective period. In this program four areas were explored in the seventh grade and four in eighth grade, each for a nine-week period. In this program all boys and girls were given the same exploratory experiences which were developed around eight vocational or avocational interests.

In discussions about the elective programs with teachers and administrators, it was found that teacher competency and the interest of

early adolescents were both considered in organizing and operating instructional programs.

#### SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

In addition to providing elective or exploratory programs, considerable attention had been given by some schools to providing opportunity for groups with special interests to meet and work under school sponsorship. Before and after schools hours and even during the noon recess, such groups as a future teacher club, folk dance club, or camera club have been conducted as cocurricular or extracurricular activities. To some extent there was an overlapping of the purposes of these activities and those of the elective program.

In a few schools, such activities as orchestra or band have been scheduled before school or during the noon hour and thereby made to appear to be cocurricular activities rather than integral parts of the instructional program.

A variety of practices is emphasized in the instructional programs for young adolescents offered by California elementary school districts. These practices range from those with emphasis on instruction in separate subject matter fields to those with emphasis on integrated learnings. The varying practices probably reflect the educational philosophy of administrators, teachers, and communities.

What constitutes the best instructional program for boys and girls in the early adolescent age group is not easily determined. In some cases decisions about instructional organization seem to have been determined on the basis of temporary necessity rather than on a clearly defined educational philosophy. On the whole, however, those responsible for designing instructional programs for seventh and eighth grade girls and boys are constantly seeking the best ways to provide effective and worth-while learning experiences.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROGRAM, GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT

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The study of instructional programs revealed consciousness in grades seven and eight of the need for planned experiences arranged so that each individual is helped (1) to maintain and improve his physical and mental fitness; (2) to grow in his understandings of the world in which he lives; (3) to acquire and practice the skills essential to effective participation in a democratic society; (4) to appreciate aesthetic expression and to express himself creatively; and (5) to build a philosophy of life which will guide his behavior in terms of democratic living. In all the schools visited the programs were planned to help girls and boys grow as citizens of a democratic society.

Most of the youth in grades seven and eight are in some phase of early adolescence. Bodily changes which create concerns for many of them are occurring rapidly. Girls and boys in grades seven and eight are testing their social skills and developing new ones through heterosexual relationships. They are rearranging their feelings about themselves, their peers, and their families. They are increasing their ability to engage in abstract thinking. The characteristics and needs of this particular age group provide clues for program planning.

The Education Code contains certain requirements regarding the subject matter to be incorporated into the program in grades seven and eight. Section 7604 states:

The course of study in the elementary schools shall include instruction in the following prescribed branches in the several grades in which each is required pursuant to this article: (a) Reading, (b) writing, (c) spelling, (d) language study, (e) arithmetic, (f) geography, (g) history of the United States and of California, (h) civics including a study of the Declaration of Independence and of the Constitution of the United States, (i) music, (j) art, (k) training for healthful living, (l) morals and manners, and such other studies not to exceed three as may be prescribed by the board of education of the city, county, or city and county.

Section 7605 states that a minimum of 600 minutes of each school week shall be devoted to reading, writing, language study, spelling, arithmetic, and civics in grades seven and eight.

Section 7901 emphasizes the requirement of instruction in the Constitution of the United States and in American history, including the study of American institutions and ideals, and of the principles of state and local government to begin not later than the opening of the eighth grade. Section 7903 requires the satisfactory passing of an examination on the Constitution before graduation from the eighth grade. Other sections<sup>1</sup> require instruction in fire prevention, physical education, public safety and accident prevention, manners and morals, and the nature of alcohol and narcotics and their effects upon the human system as determined by science.

With a few exceptions particularly in relation to art and music, the schools visited were meeting the requirements of the Education Code in terms of subject matter taught.

The requirement that state textbooks be used by all teachers in those subjects in which such textbooks are supplied is tantamount to a directive to school districts to include science in the elementary school curriculum. In a large number of districts the boards of education had prescribed science to be taught as an additional subject.

In addition to a sensitivity to the needs of young adolescents and the Education Code requirements, it was apparent that other factors played a large part in determining the planning of the programs in the schools visited in the study.

Among the factors determining the planning of programs observed in varying degrees in different schools were the following: the philosophy of the board of education, the administrators, supervisors, and teachers; community expectations; qualifications of teachers and competencies of particular teachers; availability of materials of instruction; size of school; school plant facilities; local courses of study and teachers' guides; extent of in-service education programs; teacher load; stability of faculty; social, political, and economic background of the community; local pressure groups; extent of community resources; financial support and tradition.

#### FEATURES OF PROGRAMS IN GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT

In the majority of the schools visited, certain features stood out as characteristic of programs in grades seven and eight. These features

<sup>1</sup> Education Code Sections 8051, 8159, 8001 and 7852.

gave evidence on the part of administrators, supervisors, and teachers of insights into the characteristics and needs of young adolescents, the needs of society, and the psychology of learning. The following characteristics appeared to give quality to the programs.

### *Integration of Learnings*

In most of the schools visited a conscious effort was being made to integrate learnings. The emphasis in the programs in these schools was on the social studies. Integration of learnings was accomplished, in part, by providing a large block of time for social studies and language arts. The social studies were organized around broad areas of experience or units of work.

This organization provided opportunities for pupils to increase their understandings of their social and scientific world, to acquire skills in meaningful situations, and to develop attitudes and values essential to democratic living. Language arts experiences—reading, speaking, writing, and listening were given purpose by needs which came out of the social studies activities. In these situations, no sharp break was evident in time allotments for social studies and language arts. The classes moved from social studies to language arts in terms of their needs and the nature of the activities in which they were engaged. Efforts at integration appeared to be most successful in the schools where classes spent at least half the day with one teacher.

The large block of time or the half day with one teacher permitted a high degree of flexibility which was another feature of many programs. In these situations, ample time was available for pupil-teacher planning. If a class ended one day with a language arts activity in progress, the pupils could start the next day from the point at which they left off and complete the activity. This made it possible for pupils to have enough time to accomplish their purposes and experience satisfaction.

Opportunities for integration and flexibility in the program seemed to present more of a problem in the schools where the day was divided into periods and pupils moved through the five to seven periods of the day having a different teacher for each period. Subjects can be taught without any relationship to each other in either a self-contained classroom or a departmentalized school, but it is more difficult to relate instruction in different subjects in the departmentalized schools. In a few situations, attempts were being made at correlation of subjects such as social studies and language arts through teacher planning. The

teachers of these two curriculum areas held regular conferences to acquaint each other with the sequence of the study as it developed and to anticipate needs for specific learnings.

### *Recognition of Individual Differences*

In every school visited there was evidence that individual differences were recognized to some degree. Various provisions were made for individual needs. Materials with a wide range of reading difficulty were available. Classes were grouped on the basis of achievement. Individuals and groups worked on the basis of their interest, and groups were organized for specific purposes. In only a few schools visited were the same expectancies held for all seventh and eighth graders. It was apparent in a number of the schools that a great deal of administrative effort had gone into attempts to narrow the range in academic achievement as the basis for grouping. No evidence was available that such attempts contributed either to increased academic achievement or improved mental health of the pupils.

Conferences with teachers revealed that they were usually extremely sensitive to the needs, interests, and abilities of the individuals in their classes. This sensitivity was more pronounced in situations where the teacher was with a group for the larger portion of the day.

That teachers saw girls and boys as individuals is illustrated by an incident that occurred at a meeting one of the consultants had with the three administrators and 18 teachers of a school in which he had observed. The consultant described the behavior of a boy he had observed in one of the classes without using the boy's name. When the consultant finished, the teachers said, almost in a chorus, "That must have been Tony."

### *Opportunities for Exploration*

Another feature of the programs in the schools visited were the opportunities for individuals to discover their possibilities, to satisfy interests, and to develop new interests. In a number of schools these opportunities were provided throughout the school day in all parts of the program. In addition, the majority of the programs observed provided time during the day or the week when individuals could pursue a special interest. Frequently the special interests were labeled electives. Several schools programmed a period a day four days a week for special interests or electives. The number of special interest groups or electives

offered depended upon the number of teachers in the school. The types of special interests or electives offered depended upon the special competencies of the teachers. A special interest or an elective could be pursued for six weeks in some schools and nine weeks in others. The emphasis in the majority of the special interest groups or electives was the exploration of vocational opportunities and leisure activities.

### *Enrichment for Individuals*

The majority of the schools visited made provision for enrichment of the curriculum for certain individuals. A conscious effort was made not to have individuals continue to do more of the same things in which they had already shown proficiency but to have them do something above and beyond the curriculum planned for the other pupils in the group. Several schools visited had study trips planned for an individual or a group of individuals to places which required considerable technical knowledge for understanding the processes involved. The parents provided the transportation. The individuals or groups prepared graphic materials and reports and served as resource persons in a particular area to other classes in the school.

The majority of the schools visited provided experiences in homemaking and in industrial arts as a part of the regular program. In addition to the regular periods, homemaking and industrial arts were offered as a special interest or elective. Several of the schools organized the homemaking and industrial arts on a coeducational basis. These areas of the curriculum were new to a large majority of seventh and eighth grade classes.

A tendency was observed in several schools to select something bizarre or unique in an effort to provide enrichment for individuals or groups of individuals. The need to evaluate some of the offerings in terms of the value to the individual or groups of individuals was evident.

### *Opportunities to Acquire and Practice Skills*

Every school visited programmed time for acquiring new skills and for practicing old skills. This was particularly true in relation to the skills involved in the use of numbers, reading, and language, speaking, writing, and spelling. In addition to the regular classes of instruction, a large number of schools had a separate period several times a week in which individuals could work on whatever skills they needed to acquire or improve.

### *Opportunities for Aesthetic and Creative Expression*

In schools where opportunities were provided for aesthetic and creative expression the girls and boys showed imagination, originality, and uniqueness of expression. A wide variety of art media was available for use. A large number of schools visited offered art and music only as special interests or electives. As a result many seventh and eighth graders are spending two years in an elementary school without having any school experiences in art and music even though they are required subjects according to the Education Code. This condition existed in schools even where special facilities for art and music were available.

Several of the schools visited programmed a separate period for a self-selection program in reading. Through this procedure pupils were having rich experiences with literature which were extended through various methods of sharing. There was little evidence, however, in the majority of the schools visited that pupils were having opportunity to become acquainted with and enjoy our literary heritage.

### *Opportunity for Physical Activities*

Administrators and teachers in the schools visited showed keen insight into the needs of young adolescents to be physically active. They appeared sensitive to the peer value attached by young adolescents to skill in games. In the large schools where shower facilities were available, pupils dressed for physical education and the required period of 20 minutes was extended to 45 or 50 minutes.

A large majority of the schools visited had play days either within the district or with adjoining districts. These days were socializing events. Nearly every school visited had a program of social and folk dances and other recreational activities which contributed to social development.

### SUMMARY

The programs in grades seven and eight in the districts involved in the study indicate that the administrators, supervisors, and teachers in general agree on the same purposes for education. The variations in the program reveal different philosophies regarding how to attain the purposes.

The programs in the schools visited were characterized by a sensitivity on the part of the planners to the purposes of education in a democratic society. There was evidence that the planners sensed that

experiences should be directed toward the perpetuation and realization of democratic values. The pupils were learning the process of democracy by living democratically. Opportunities were provided to acquire the knowledges and understandings, skills and habits, attitudes and values essential to full participation in a democratic society. There was recognition of the needs, interests, and abilities peculiar to young adolescents. Psychologically sound ways of learning were being utilized. In an effort to educate each individual to his fullest capacity, special provisions were made for those pupils who deviated so sharply from the groups in various ways that they did not benefit from group instruction. Special provisions and programs were provided for the physically handicapped, slow learners, superior achievers, emotionally disturbed, and others who were educationally maladjusted. Special facilities and materials of instruction added strength to the program. The emphasis in the programs was on the uniqueness and worth of each individual and the responsibility of the school to help him grow as a democratic citizen.

## FIVE MORNINGS IN THE SEVENTH GRADE— A SEQUENCE IN LIVING AND LEARNING

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Teaching at any level is no job for the weak, the easily discouraged, or the cynical. Successful teachers of grades seven and eight sometimes feel on Friday afternoons that they need a special measure of strength, optimism, faith, and diligence. Perhaps they do. They carry grave responsibilities.

The statements that follow outline four of these responsibilities which relate directly to the curriculum. Every girl and boy in grades seven and eight should have the opportunity (1) to learn and to practice the skills of democratic living; (2) to develop the skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic to their highest level of capacity; (3) to engage in creative activities in accordance with their interests and talents; and (4) to explore appropriate portions of the knowledge of the world in a carefully selected and well-organized sequence of study.

It is not possible for even the most diligent teacher to achieve these objectives unless a second list of essentials to a good program is respected. Every girl or boy in grade seven and eight has the right (1) to have one teacher who knows him and his parents, and who has the interest, ability, and time to give friendly and supporting guidance; (2) to have opportunities to establish friendships with members of his peer group; (3) to feel that the school is his, and that he belongs; (4) to have the opportunity to help plan his daily activities, to make choices, and to assume the attendant responsibilities; and (5) to be a person in his own right—a person who is valued—regardless of his IQ, his place on the social scale, his athletic prowess, or his winning smile.

What kind of program will meet the needs of young adolescents? In order to be specific let us follow a seventh grade during the morning hours for one week. The program is characterized by attention to individual differences, use of audio-visual materials, pupil-teacher planning, and problem-solving activities. Activities scheduled for the afternoon will utilize these same essentials for good learning. However, only ex-

periences related to the integrative experiences of a unified approach to the teaching of social studies and language arts will be described in detail.

The class enrolls 25 girls and boys. The following data regarding the chronological and mental age and achievement in reading and arithmetic indicate the pupils' range of characteristics:

Chronological Age—13 years 4 months to 11 years 9 months

Mental Age—16 years 7 months to 9 years 4 months

Reading achievement—10th grade 2 months to 4th grade 4 months

Arithmetic achievement—8th grade 9 months to 6th grade 1 month

A class schedule planned to meet the needs of these children follows:

*Class Schedule*

9:00-10:30	Social Studies—Science Language Arts—(including Reading)
10:30-11:00	Physical Education and Recess
11:00-12:00	Activities related to social studies or language arts
1:00-1:45	Mathematics
1:45-2:15	Music
2:15-2:30	Recess
2:30-3:30	Exploratory Subjects, such as Art, Science, Industrial Arts, Typing, Foreign Language, Shop, Homemaking. These may be elective or required.

One teacher is with this group from nine until two-fifteen with the exception of a 20-minute period for physical education. Another teacher has the group during the last hour of the day for the exploratory period. In this organization the teacher meets approximately 50 pupils daily—25 in his homeroom and 25 in the exploratory period for which he also has responsibility. The pupil meets three different teachers—his homeroom teacher, the teacher of physical education, and the teacher of his exploratory group. He also adjusts to three different groups of children during the day. These contacts are considered to be enough to insure flexibility and practice in making adjustments. In this plan, however, one teacher has a child long enough to know him well, the homeroom gives a physical center for operation, and large blocks of time are provided so that projects can be planned, worked on, and evaluated with some feelings of satisfaction. This schedule provides a 20-minute period for rest or preparation for the homeroom teacher while the class is at physical education. If it were deemed advisable the mathematics and music periods could be in charge of special teachers.

The time will be spent in a study of the social studies-science curriculum with the related language arts of speaking, reading, and writ-

ing. These are studied during the first hour and a half of the day. The hour from eleven to twelve is scheduled as related activities—art or industrial arts activities growing out of the social studies, spelling, penmanship drill, formal language study, and skill-type or library reading as needed. This would be a period for instruction to individuals, to small groups, or to the entire class as needs arose.

This hour might also be scheduled for one activity over an extended period of time. For instance a program in individualized reading might occupy a major portion of this time for several weeks. If deemed advisable, written composition, or other areas might be emphasized.

*World Trade*<sup>1</sup> is the curriculum unit studied by the group whose activities are described in the following pages. The proposed framework for the social studies sets the theme for Grade Seven as *Life in the World Today—Europe, the Mediterranean Area, Middle East, and the Beginning of the United States*. The theme for Grade Six is an *Overview of Global Geography and Study of Life in Latin America*. A study of world trade in the seventh grade builds upon the previously acquired knowledge of global geography, encourages the use of information gained concerning the economy of Latin America, and extends interest to other parts of the world.

The Mediterranean area and the Middle East have been great trading areas ever since history has been recorded, and the beginning of the United States was closely tied to trade relations affecting the Mediterranean, England, and the continent of Europe. A well-planned study of world trade would help boys and girls understand how economic needs, beliefs, and technology modify the way nations view one another. The study should include consideration of the impact of the European common market and other current economic developments on the continent of Europe. A natural outcome of the world trade unit would be a depth study of one of the countries of Western Europe or of Great Britain, who is one of our most important trading partners. These brief statements indicate that much of the content recommended for study in grade seven in *Report of the State Central Committee on Social Studies*<sup>2</sup> can be logically presented through a study of world trade.

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<sup>1</sup> See *A Good Day in the Seventh Grade*. Filmstrip and Recording by Helen Heffernan. California Association for Childhood Education, 7505 Fairmount Avenue, El Cerrito 8, California.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the State Central Committee on Social Studies*. Sacramento: California State Department of Education. October, 1959, pp. 120-123 (mimeographed).

The teacher has known that a unit on world trade would be studied since assignments were made in the spring when the staff planned the school's sequence in the social studies with the help of the principal and the supervisor. A well-planned resource unit is available to guide the teacher. Even experienced teachers welcome this help. They recognize that creative teaching is based on solid knowledge and that units are written as guides not as prescriptions. The teacher has collected materials to enliven the environment, has read several of the suggested references for teachers, and has carefully examined many of the books listed for pupil use. He has previewed films and filmstrips.

The unit was launched through a planned environment which encouraged the girls and boys to ask questions. Some of the questions drawn from the class were: What is an import? an export? Why do people like foreign cars? What is free trade? To what countries do we ship our goods? From what countries do we receive the commodities we need? The class has been organized into committees to find answers to these questions. The story is told by five different children, each one reporting the experiences of one morning.

#### MONDAY—told by Sharon

After attendance, cafeteria count and flag salute this morning, Bill reported on an article he had read in the paper about how dried fruit from the San Joaquin Valley is sent to many different countries. This got us talking about other exports until Mr. Mills suggested that we review our plans for the day. Everyone except Henry and Bill knew the group he was working in. They couldn't decide, so the group working on the mural asked Henry to work with them, and Bill decided to read what the encyclopedia had to say about foreign trade to help him get some ideas. Six people are working on the mural, five are making individual import-export charts, three are writing requests for new materials about foreign cars. Five are looking up material on the history of world trade, and six of us are getting ready for a panel discussion on *What Free Trade Means to Me*. This is the first day that we have worked in these groups. We planned them last Friday.

We worked until a few minutes past ten and then we came together for a discussion. After we had discussed work groups and reported a few small problems, Mr. Mills said he had something he wanted to discuss with us. He said he was concerned over the quality of penmanship in our last compositions. We had written imaginary stories about a trip on a freighter and had read some of them in class last Friday. Mr. Mills asked what we thought we could do to improve ourselves. Several thought a little more care would solve their problem. Others felt they needed review on letter formations.

It was decided that after physical education, one group would recopy their compositions and Mr. Mills would help the others with letter formations. He thought Sally, Bill, Frank and Eva Mae should be in the group to get special help.

After physical education and recess, we tackled these jobs we had decided upon. When we finished we read our library books or did other quiet work. About

eleven-thirty, Mr. Mills called us all together. He read the poem *Cargoes* by John Masefield aloud to us. We talked about why we enjoyed the reading and listed the reasons on the chalkboard. Then Marion and Tom each read the poem trying to utilize the advice the class had given. Mr. Mills suggested that we all read this poem or another of our choice or a short prose selection into the tape recorder to test ourselves. We would have some regular practice in oral reading and make another recording in about a month. It was decided that Sam and Everett would be in charge of the tape recording and would put up a schedule for us to follow. By the time we had done this planning, it was time for lunch.

#### TUESDAY—told by Henry

One section of our bulletin board is for items from newspapers and magazines that will fit under the caption *World Trade Today*. Charts on ship movements from San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego harbors are often included. This morning David, Manuel, and Bill said they would like to study these charts to find out what ships had been in the harbors, where they were going, and what goods they carried. The class thought that would be a good idea and suggested that they get the facts for the same day in the three harbors. Mr. Mills always brings the section of a Los Angeles paper that carries the shipping news; Dick can bring a San Diego paper and I promised to borrow a San Francisco paper from our neighbor. The boys were going to study the reports tomorrow and report to the class on Thursday.

It was then time to work in our regular groups. Bill had decided to do an individual study of navigation instruments. He likes to work by himself on jobs like this. Henry will work with the committee that is making the mural.

At eleven o'clock some of us made recordings of our oral reading. We went to the music room where we would not be disturbed. Some of us hadn't found yet what we wanted to read. We decided that we must make our selections by tomorrow, because if we didn't plan something definite, some of us just never would get around to it. We talked a little about whether or not oral reading was important. We decided it was.

The people who were not working on this project, had some time for individualized reading. Mr. Mills helped some of us who were trying to increase our reading speed. We all keep track of the books we read and sometimes we talk about them in class.

#### WEDNESDAY—told by Fernanda

About once a week we turn in questions which we'd like to discuss in class. We don't need to sign our papers, and most of the questions are interesting. Mr. Mills read us five of the questions which had been turned in since we had our last discussion. The questions<sup>a</sup> were (1) Why don't I get along with my sister? (2) I would like to be a good friend. How do I do this? (3) Why do some boys and girls like each other's companionship, while others are criticizing each other all the time? (4) If someone talks about you behind your back what do you do if you want to be their friend very much? (5) Why do some people always want to fight? We decided to discuss "How to be a good friend." Bert will lead the discussion which will be held tomorrow.

We knew our groups for social studies and so we got right to work. In our evaluation period, the people who were making import and export charts got into a big argument about foreign cars. Some said that bringing in foreign cars was

<sup>a</sup> From material supplied by Mrs. Dorothy Pepper, Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, India.

hurting American manufacturers and dealers—others said if the people of Europe couldn't sell their cars to us a lot of them couldn't make a living and they might turn to Communism. They went on and on, until Mr. Mills said "It seems to me that there is a real difference of opinion here. Some of you have your minds made up on opposite sides of the question. Some of the rest of us aren't sure which group has the best reasons." What could we do? Well, we had to go out to physical education before we got that one settled.

After we came back we decided to ask Dr. Somberg who teaches economics at the junior college to come and talk with us. Sally was to write a letter asking him and suggesting several different dates. Everyone who wants to is to hand questions to the import-export group. They will select the ones which the class will ask Dr. Somberg to discuss if he can come.

After all this planning, it was a real relief to read by myself the last half-hour before lunch. My book is *Daughter of Wolf House*.<sup>4</sup> It is the story of an Indian girl who has a lot of trouble.

#### THURSDAY—told by George

Well, the first thing this morning David, Manuel, and Bill reported on their study of ship movements in three California harbors. I am including the chart they put on the chalkboard.

Los Angeles Harbor, a total of 28 ships in port—registered to Norwegian, West German, Greek, Italian, and Japanese lines.

San Diego Harbor, a total of 32 ships in port—30 from different branches of the U. S. Navy and 2 registered to American lines.

San Francisco Harbor, a total of 16 ships in port—registered to American, British, Dutch and West German lines.

We talked about the goods these ships probably carried. The boys had a book from the San Francisco Port Authority that told all about the exports and imports to the different countries. They found that Canada is the biggest buyer of goods from San Francisco harbor, and that after that come Great Britain, West Germany, and Holland. We don't have this information for Los Angeles and San Diego harbors, but David said he would check at the public library tonight to see if he could find it. We all thought it was interesting to know how trade with Europe and other parts of the world was carried on through California ports.

The import-export people wanted to continue yesterday's debate about foreign cars, but Mary Ellen reminded them that they had taken a lot of class time yesterday and she thought they should quit arguing until after Dr. Somberg's visit.

The group working on the mural wanted some help. Mr. Mills suggested that we ask Miss Greene who is the art supervisor and a real artist herself to come in and give suggestions. Helen is to ask her at noon when it will be convenient for her to help us.

Mr. Mills said that on Monday each group should say when the members wished to give their reports and how much time they would need, and whether or not they expected to invite visitors. Sally read the letter inviting Dr. Somberg to meet with us. We thought it was a good letter, but that it ought to be written in ink on official school paper. We asked Mary to copy the letter in ink. Her handwriting is really perfect. Toward the end of the period some of the group

<sup>4</sup> Margaret E. Bell. *Daughter of Wolf House*. New York: William Morrow & Co., Inc. 1957.

working on the history of world trade got noisy and Mr. Mills had them put their work away early and go to their seats.

After physical education he asked them what was the matter. They are usually good workers. It seems they had run out of interesting material, and two of them wanted the same bulletin, and Harvey said he was tired of World Trade history and wanted to find out about air cargo or something else.

One of the things we decided at the beginning of the year is that we would finish what we started, so we thought Harvey needn't read any more on his topic if he didn't want to, but could start his written report now. When he finished that he could then go on to air cargo if he was still interested. Mr. Mills reminded the group that there were several film strips they hadn't reviewed and appointed two of them to make plans to see this material during work period tomorrow.

Today we all reviewed our individual spelling lists and some of us studied for our regular check-up. The hour before lunch is always a busy one. Most of us are working on things we need to improve in and we certainly keep Mr. Mills busy. We help each other some too.

At about eleven-thirty today we all stopped our work and discussed our question *How Can I Be A Good Friend?* Bert led the discussion and Susan was the recorder. As we talked she wrote down our suggestions. She wrote the following:

**How Can I Be A Good Friend? \***

Be nice and neat. Keep saying the good points about your friends. Don't be smart, be yourself, don't show off. Let your friends know you like them, but don't go broadcasting it all over school. Be clean, and good-mannered and friendly. Treat everyone equal to yourself. Make people know you like them.

Mr. Mills thought our parents would be interested in this, and asked if it were all right with us to report the discussion when he meets with them next week. Some of us didn't want him to do it, but most of us thought it was a good idea, so I guess he will.

**FRIDAY—reported by Miriam**

Two children from the third grade came in this morning. They are studying the harbor and asked if some one in our room could tell them about boats and cargoes. They had some questions they wanted answered and they hoped we could come on Tuesday morning. We decided that Susan and Jim would be able to help them best, and we selected some good pictures to show them. We had a big discussion about whether one of them should read the poem *Cargoes* for the class. We finally decided that although the children wouldn't understand the poem the way we do, they would like the rhythm. Tim said he bet his next door neighbor who is in the third grade would understand it too. While we were talking about this, Mrs. Fisk brought in a new pupil. His name is Duncan, and he comes from North Dakota. We have good plans for making newcomers feel at home, and after a little while, the new boy began to look quite happy.

At about 9:30, Miss Greene came in to help the group with the mural. We all listened because while only five are actually doing the work, we all have ideas about it, and it is supposed to express many of the things all members of our class are learning about World Trade. The morning went fast.

Just before lunch Mr. Mills asked us to come together to review what we had done as a class during the week. We evaluated our work groups and reminded

\* From material supplied by Mrs. Dorothy Pepper, Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, Indio.

ourselves that plans for reports were due on Monday. Sam reported that all except three of us had done the oral reading on the tape-recorder. They said they would do it without fail on Monday. Sally reported that Dr. Somberg could come at eleven o'clock on Tuesday, so the Import-Export group had to copy the questions and get them in the mail for him today. We decided that this had been a good busy week and that we had some interesting things to look forward to for next week. When someone said that, we all laughed, because tonight is square dance night, and that means we don't have to wait for next week for something interesting to happen.

It is obvious that teaching of high quality is going on in Mr. Mills' classroom. He is providing opportunities for group guidance, helping girls and boys build responsible work habits, and seeing that the program has vitality and zest. He is helping girls and boys with problems of individual instruction in the skill areas.

This description of a portion of one week's activities does not adequately describe the program. However, it does identify several threads of continuity which taken all together at the end of a year will indicate that a well-balanced program has been provided.

During the week this group has had instruction and practice in the following areas: (1) in group planning; (2) in building good work habits; (3) in solving personal problems; (4) in understanding themselves and their fellows; (5) in oral reading, spelling, and penmanship; (6) in reading and in writing; (7) in problem-solving; (8) in research skills; (9) in creative art activities; (10) in assuming responsibility. The teacher has been an observer, a leader, an authority figure, a friend, and always a member of the group.

Girls and boys who have experiences of this sort, write comments such as these about their school. <sup>6</sup>

I walked back to my homeroom and got my materials and left. When I got home I looked back on the day and then I thought it was rather fun.

With activities such as these we feel more like a school than just an individual going to school with hundreds of others.

A little extra teamwork and fun never hurt anyone.

I like just about everything in school. I think it's a wonderful thing that we can learn and have schools like we do.

If it weren't for people like our teachers what would our country be in the future? I really do like my days in school.

<sup>6</sup> Taken from *My Day* stories written by pupils in the 57 schools visited in the seventh and eighth grade survey.

## SHARING WITH THE NEIGHBORS: PROMISING PRACTICES IN GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT

STAFF MEMBERS, *Bureau of Elementary Education*  
*California State Department of Education*

The girls and boys now in grades seven and eight are growing up in a world where they need the forthright virtues and the faith and courage associated with the founders of our country. They also need to know and to practice the skills of co-operation and to approach the complexities of international living with confidence. They must accustom themselves to the reality of rapid change in their lives and begin to accept their responsibility for the direction of this change. They need to find accepted outlets for the energies of youth, because the plains and mountains and forests of an unexplored continent are no longer open to the restless and aggressive among them. They need to master the tools of learning—reading, writing, and arithmetic—at a higher level than ever before. They also need to master more information than ever before. More is known and therefore more should be learned. At no time in history has education been so complex or so important. Educators are aware of these problems and are constantly endeavoring to find the best possible solutions for them.

Practices employed that were considered to be especially promising are described. These were observed during the 1958-59 survey of grades seven and eight and a few from other sources are presented. Many of the practices described are not new, nor has their use necessarily been limited to the schools in which they were observed. Therefore, the names of the schools or districts have not been given except when the solutions were outstandingly different.

Each person visiting the schools in the districts included in the study reported the practices which interested him and which could be observed in a brief period of time or for which brief descriptions could be secured from an administrator or teacher. The content of the reports revealed the rich variety of curriculum experiences available to the girls and boys in grades seven and eight of California elementary school districts. The fact that some phases of the curricu-

lum receive little or no mention in this report may point to a need for further endeavors in those fields.

The practices reported have been organized under the following headings:

Using the Resources of the Community  
Learning and Practicing the Skills of Democracy  
Developing Individual Interests and Capabilities  
Improving Various Aspects of the Program

#### USING THE RESOURCES OF THE COMMUNITY

Many schools are concerned that girls and boys have realistic opportunities to understand the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship. These experiences are often presented through study trips and community activities, as well as through reading and group discussion. Study trips to local agencies of government are an accepted part of the curriculum in many schools.

Trips to Sacramento or other places of interest lend zest and purpose to the curriculum in a growing number of schools.<sup>1</sup> One of the signs of spring in Sacramento is the sight of the big yellow school busses lined up around Capitol Park as the pupils visit the State Legislature. Many classes come from distances which require overnight stops. The experience of stopping overnight in a hotel or motel and of having meals in restaurants is novel and exciting for many of the children. Expenses are usually met through the co-operative efforts of the school district, of the parent-teacher association and other interested groups, and of the pupils themselves. Various means of raising funds so that all can go on the trip are in use. Often the trip is extended for a day or more and the sights of San Francisco are included.

Planning what to see, discussing ways of raising necessary funds, and deciding on all the details of appropriate dress and behavior give many opportunities to practice problem solving and other skills essential to the development of a citizen.

The vivid experience of seeing the Capitol of their state and of observing the Legislature in session is now part of the educational experiences enjoyed by many California girls and boys.<sup>2</sup> It is a matter

<sup>1</sup> See *A Good Day in the Eighth Grade*. Filmstrip and Recording by Helen Heffernan. California Association for Childhood Education, 7505 Fairmount Avenue, El Cerrito 8, California.

<sup>2</sup> Inquiries regarding plans for visiting the Capitol should be directed to Flora R. Gilliam, State Capitol Building, Sacramento.

for regret that many of the larger schools do not feel that it is possible to plan travel experiences for their pupils. Participation is much higher in small schools.

In fact one small school in Glenn County, the Kanawha Elementary School, planned so that its pupils had the privilege of a trip to Washington, D.C., during the summer of 1959. Funds were raised, a bus was chartered, an itinerary planned, and the group set forth. The school has a strong instrumental music program and concerts were given at several stops en route. The whole community was involved in making this exciting experience available.

One of the urgent needs of young adolescents is to grow up. Among the desirable activities of adulthood is active participation in the affairs of the community. During the last few years, the Dad's Club of Bloomington has worked to establish the San Bernardino County Museum in the community. Gerald A. Smith, Superintendent of the Bloomington public schools, and other educators of the area have given leadership and help to the project. An attractive center has been built and extensive exhibits have been collected and arranged. Support and co-operation have also come from the San Bernardino County Historical Society and other interested citizens. Throughout the project, girls and boys have been allowed and encouraged to participate. They helped to raise the funds to build the original structure. A modern building now houses a growing collection of natural history materials as well as many relics of Indian and pioneer days.

Some seventh and eighth graders have taken trips into the desert and mountains to assist adults in the collection of Indian artifacts. They have also helped to classify and label materials and to arrange exhibits of them in the museum. The community, the museum, and the girls and boys have profited because youth has been stimulated to contribute to a public enterprise of great significance.

Involving young people in helping to make the decisions which affect their lives is another way to build responsible attitudes and actions. Discussion, too, takes on a new dimension when problems of significance are considered. The parents and pupils of the Vina Danks School in Ontario discussed a set of guiding principles which had been distributed by the California Congress of Parents and Teachers entitled, *We Can Agree*. The purpose of the discussion was to further co-operation among parents and pupils for a safe and acceptable program of social activities for young people. The president of the student

body served as chairman. The panel was presented at a regular weekly student body council meeting with representatives of the seventh and eighth grade classes in attendance. In preparation for the discussion, the class representatives had discussed the principles with their fellow classmates. The representatives came prepared to report the agreements which had been reached in their classes. The chairman conducted the panel so that participation was not limited to the members of the panel, but extended to secure the reactions of the class representatives.

#### LEARNING AND PRACTICING THE SKILLS OF DEMOCRACY

Ethical practices, sound knowledge, and skill in communication are essentials of good citizenship. The total school program carries responsibility for developing those essentials, and the types of interaction with the community described in the preceding section are vital to their full development. Within the school, the social studies and language arts programs plus activities of the student body are most directly concerned with providing the experiences which develop responsible citizens. The material which follows describes a variety of programs planned to fulfill these purposes.

The study of the United States Constitution was vitalized in a number of schools visited through class organizations which simulated various structures and activities of the Federal government. Bills related to class and school activities were introduced and followed through to become laws by the same procedures as those followed in Congress. Committees were organized corresponding to standing committees of Congress. Problems were presented to the committees and committee action was taken. The girls and boys seemed to be living the Constitution in terms of their own problems.

Many teachers of grades seven and eight attribute their success to the fact that they respect the right of the girls and boys to express opinions regarding current issues of grave importance. One teacher asked a group of seventh graders to write their answers to the two questions that follow:

1. Do you believe that all people, regardless of race, color, or other differences should be equal in all respects? Give reasons for your answers.
2. Should all schools be integrated? Why?

Altogether 34 girls and boys responded to these questions; 33 in the affirmative, and one in the negative on both questions.

The following statements are typical of responses to question one:

Yes, very definitely, because color is only skin deep.

Yes, people are people, no matter what color or race they are.

They all should have the same rights.

Opinions regarding question two were expressed in statements such as these:

Yes, we will have more friends to make, and more people to know.

I believe in integration because I think everybody should like other people and not be against them. They are about the same as us except for their race or color. Just think if we were Negroes and the whites wouldn't let us go to school we would feel awful bad.<sup>3</sup>

Another technique which gives opportunities for the consideration of vital problems also provides practice in the skills of debate and discussion. In some districts, classes are divided into panels of four speakers each. The members decide on a topic and whether to debate the issue or to explore it in a discussion. The variety of topics discussed indicates the wide range of interest and maturity typical of young adolescents. Some topics representative of those debated follow:

Should capital punishment be abolished?

Should parents help children with their homework?

Can the United States and Russia live peacefully with each other?

Should girls and boys go steady in the eighth grade?

In many schools visited, the activities of the student body afforded a variety of realistic opportunities in oral and written expression. Illustrative of such an activity are the speeches of campaign managers and candidates for election. The following speeches written and delivered by the candidates illustrate this activity.

**FACULTY, WORTHY OPPONENT, FELLOW STUDENTS:**

Today we are assembled for the purpose of showing you, the student body, who are running for the different offices for the Spring Semester. It is a great honor for me to even run for this very high office. I feel that whether you elect me or my worthy opponent, the important thing is that you realize that you are

<sup>3</sup> Material contributed by H. H. McHargue, Thomas Jefferson School, Indio.

exercising the privileges that are in our free American Democracy. I am sorry to say that there are many people in the United States that do not exercise this privilege of voting and electing whom they think most capable for the office.

From the very first time I set foot on this Campus, I felt I wanted to take part in the government of our school. From this form of democratic self-government, so widely used in our school, we are gaining large responsibilities as well as valuable experience which will be beneficial to us in our later life.

And now, fellow students, we pause from our school activities tomorrow to celebrate the birth of a truly great American, Abraham Lincoln, who in the early part of our democracy, fought courageously and tirelessly for the rights and freedoms we now enjoy. That great President was elected by the exercise of the right to vote that you and I expect to use in this election. Because of his election to the Presidency, our country grew and became strong. The rights of the people were, then and now, the first consideration of self-government. You have the right to vote. Think it over tomorrow and on Friday, come back and vote for what you think is right.

Speeches such as this not only give purpose and direction to the development of the skills of oral and written communication, but also provide necessary practice in the processes of democracy. Girls and boys can discuss the qualities of a good leader and help to decide what kind of campaign material should be used. Some questioning of certain adult practices may result if the student body establishes and maintains the high standards of good taste and fair play shown in the examples given. Values are built and standards are raised through such opportunities for free discussion and decision.

Another type of realistic experience is provided in schools where pupils manage a student store. Managing these stores provides practical experience in buying, selling, and management procedures. The student store at the Monte Vista Elementary School in the Vaca Valley Union Elementary School District is open for a half hour after school closes. Pupils from the nearby high school as well as those enrolled at Monte Vista can purchase milk products and other wholesome snack items at this time.

Publishing a school newspaper is an accepted activity in many seventh and eighth grades. Various plans are in use. Sometimes the paper

is published as part of the regular language arts program. In other situations, journalism is part of the elective program. Whatever the organization, time within the regular school day is usually provided for all the activities connected with a successful publication. Pupils are often responsible for illustrations, editing, and layout as well as for duplication and distribution. The mimeographing or ditto work is held to a high level in most of the papers. Smudged and untidy copies are not distributed because the school paper goes into the homes of the pupils and also into the community. The girls and boys take great pride in having their paper reflect the highest standards of the school. Student editors learn the importance of correct form and spelling as they check the work of their classmates. The faculty adviser performs the role of the chief editor and helps the student editors perform their functions at a high level.

In the report that follows the editor of *The Yolo Blazer* tells how he does his job.

#### THE PAPER

We of the *Blazer* staff are busy between editions and as editor I would like to tell you what happens behind the scenes. First day we start our articles. The reporters remind the teachers and request the news of each room to be in the following Tuesday, feature articles are started, and the newspaper is on its way. From then on various jobs are being performed. The editor proofreads the articles and o.k.'s them for blocking-out. Then the reporter or someone who is not busy blocks the articles out and again the article is o.k.'d by the editor. Finally the article is put in the morgue.

On the Thursday night before the day the paper comes out Mr. Hunt types the articles into pages and gives them to Mrs. Vann. She then makes about 300 copies of each page. Lastly we put together the pages, count the copies, and hand them out to the different rooms. With this explanation I know that if we make mistakes (and don't we all?) or cut an article or take an article out, you will understand why.<sup>4</sup>

Reports of interviews with visitors to the school or with citizens of the community frequently enliven the pages of school newspapers. Editorial comments give young writers opportunity to express the aspirations of youth.

<sup>4</sup> From *The Yolo Blazer*, Yolo Elementary School, Newman, October 24, 1958.

## DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS AND CAPACITIES

Teachers of grades seven and eight often suggest that the girls and boys write their autobiographies. Frequently these are illustrated with photographs or drawings and are bound into simple booklets. Thus dignified, the autobiographies become treasured personal and family possession. This is a project which makes correct form and legible handwriting essential in a highly motivated situation. The project also helps teachers understand the experiences which have had significance for the girls and boys. The excerpts\* which follow make apparent values of such writing:

## A FAMILY STORY IS RETOLD

Fourteen years ago on April 9, 1945, in a Long Beach hospital there was a boy born to Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Walker. This boy happened to be me. I was 21 inches long and weighed 7 pounds 9 ounces.

When I was 6 months of age I threw my baby bottle on the floor after I had finishing drinking all the milk. The bottle was plastic so it wouldn't break so my mother could use the bottle again. What was so funny about me throwing the bottle on the floor was that my sisters and brother didn't throw their bottles on the floor after they had finished drinking all their milk!

Jerry wrote his autobiography in the third person:

## LIFE IS EXCITING FOR JERRY

Jerry's favorite sport is car racing. He has a small sports car with a two and a half horse power lawn mower motor. It goes between 15 and 20 miles an hour. Carl has one just like it and they have fun racing them on a track they built.

## SCHOOL EXPERIENCES ARE LONG REMEMBERED

My teacher in third grade was Miss Andrews. She was good looking and she had very long fingernails. She kept getting her fingernails caught in the cupboard doors. Once she made me write all of the spelling words one hundred times each. In fourth grade I had Mrs. Davis for a teacher. We made wet clay pottery in her room and I still have a cup and saucer that I made then.

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\* Supplied by seventh grade pupils, Atascadero, George Riddle, teacher.

The kind of knowledge these autobiographies provide is helpful in planning the curriculum and in providing effective guidance. Schools are making many adjustments in elective programs in order to meet these needs.

Descriptions of other approaches to the problem of meeting individual interest and needs follow:

A few schools were changing their elective program to a series of required exploratory programs. In these schools, one period a day is reserved for short-term (9 weeks) programs—4 in the seventh grade and 4 in the eighth grade. These exploratory experiences are given to all seventh and eighth graders. The purpose is to provide the pupils with a wide range of activities as a basis for making future choices in high school. These exploratory activities are selected on the basis of teacher competency and diversity of interest. They range from "History of Humboldt County" to "Body Building." The teachers prefer this approach to the traditional elective program. Reactions from pupils and parents are also affirmative.

In certain schools, functional industrial arts, "home mechanics," has been introduced to replace the traditional woodworking course. The home mechanics course consists of manipulative skills—how to fix a leaking faucet, how to change a tire, simple plumbing, wiring electrical appliances, and other simple functional operations. In some schools, both boys and girls are enrolled in these classes and seem to value the opportunity to work together on such practical projects.

Programs in homemaking are offered in many schools. The curriculum varies with the needs of the community. The accounts which follow illustrate how the programs are designed to meet the needs.

One of the primary teachers of a small school made it possible for the girls of the combination seventh and eighth grade to have an excellent experience in homemaking. She taught the group for an hour and a half each week after the children in her room had gone home. The County Chapter of the American Red Cross contributed to the program by providing the services of a registered nurse to help the teacher with instruction in home nursing and baby care. Because the courses met official requirements, the Red Cross furnished all equipment and supplies and presented the girls with certificates when the courses were completed. During the year instruction was also given in some of the fundamentals of cooking and sewing.

In spite of inadequate facilities for homemaking classes in some situations, girls were learning the rudiments of cooking, sewing, and other domestic arts. Clothes made in class were modeled for other classmates or for members of the parent-teacher association. Opportunities to serve refreshments at social occasions at the school introduced a functional element into the homemaking program.

In another school, the teacher of homemaking asked the girls to write reports evaluating their year's experiences. The excerpts from the reports that follow tell the reader a great deal about the girls who wrote the reports as well as about the quality of instruction in the class. What teacher could read these reports without adding something to his conviction that his work is the world's most important and rewarding.

Homemaking means a lot to me. I like to do things skillfully and be able to take care of myself. I can't go out and buy clothes whenever I want something. I want to be able to make my own clothing, fix my own meals, clean my house, and take care of myself.

I want to know what is good for me and what's not. What looks nice on me, what doesn't. I want to know that I can take care of myself. I hope to learn during my school years all that I will need to know—all about cooking, sewing, health, safety, child care, homemaking and everything else that goes with it.

Homemaking to me means learning how to sew, cook, and a countless number of other things, so that some day I may have a home of my own. Learning to do these things at school and at home will naturally be a tremendous help in later life. Eighth grade is not too young to begin thinking about what kind of home you'll want yours to be and how you'll help make it that way. Learning to be a homemaker means not only sewing and cooking, but being happy, and developing or helping to develop a happy and friendly environment for all those around you. Of course, as mentioned, it also means learning to sew, cook, handle money, make a budget, do the marketing, keep a house, and more. When, some day I do have a home of my own, I can help make it a happy place.<sup>8</sup>

A Future Teachers Club for eighth grade girls and boys is a popular elective in many schools. The description of one of these programs

<sup>8</sup> Materials supplied by Mrs. Dorothy Pepper, Homemaking Teacher, Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, Indio.

may be of general interest. Four days a week the elective period (one hour) is spent in various classrooms of the district under the direction of master teachers. The girls and boys observe the younger children and assist the teacher with certain activities. They read or tell stories to small groups, help with games, assist with study trips, and work with the teacher to make the classroom environment stimulating and attractive. On the fifth day, the group meets with the principal who presents material on the philosophy of education as well as on teaching methods and techniques. He also responds to questions regarding the observation and leads discussions related to the various activities which the girls and boys have experienced.

In the Yuba Gardens School of the Ella Elementary School District the girls of grades seven and eight have a library club in which they receive instruction and practice in library skills. The school library is open before and after school and at noon. It is also open two nights a week to pupils and to adult members of the community.

#### IMPROVING VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM

The following series of brief descriptions illustrate how schools are trying out new ideas and modifying old ones in order adequately to meet the diverse needs of the girls and boys under their care and direction.

In smaller schools without built-in science laboratory equipment, commercially produced portable laboratory tables and equipment had been purchased to be moved from room to room, thus providing opportunity for teachers and pupils to profit from an enriched program. Graphic presentation gave evidence that a variety of science activities were under way and also that field trips to collect specimens were an integral part of the science program. In several schools, effective use of committee work on science projects was apparent. Demonstrations and discussions were led by pupils rather than being conducted by the teacher.

Studies in depth of selected areas of Asia, Africa, and Europe were going forward in many seventh grade classrooms. Room environments indicated that the girls and boys were having opportunities to develop murals and participate in other art activities related to the curriculum unit being studied. Time lines for the graphic presentation of historical sequences were in evidence.

Many schools rated discussion of world affairs and current events high on the list of social studies activities and used current affairs

as a basis for further study in social studies areas. In one school, newspaper clippings about current affairs in Egypt led to a formal study of Egypt in some depth.

Current affairs take on great significance when the clippings which have been on the bulletin board are reviewed at the end of the week and those of importance selected for mounting. The articles and pictures are then organized under appropriate headings, labeled, indexed, and filed. Thus the girls and boys themselves select and prepare some of their own reference material and can readily review the history of important topics which are current in the news over a period of time.

In one district, a few pupils in grades seven and eight attend summer classes in reading, speech, and music at a state college which is located in the area. Developmental reading programs were in evidence in many of the schools. Literature classes using graded reading materials were also seen. Interest was high and discussion lively. A noticeable de-emphasis on interschool competitive sports in favor of intramural programs was apparent.

Making hobby horses and other toys is a popular project in shop classes. The toys are supplied to the children in the kindergarten. Others are made by children as gifts for their young brothers and sisters.

In certain schools instruction in instrumental music, both band and orchestra, is offered for an hour daily. In addition, one hour of individual instruction is provided each week to pupils participating in the program. Much of this instruction is given in out-of-school hours.

The Hayward Elementary School District gives evidence of interest in instrumental music through its high enrollment in elective classes. Each school has its own orchestra and small group instruction is provided for various instruments.

In one school a string ensemble plays one day a week at noon for the enjoyment of other pupils. An Honor Orchestra, composed of the top instrumentalists, meets each Saturday morning for a special practice period.

Vocal music is not neglected in the district to which this school belongs. Some 1,400 girls and boys are enrolled in special vocal music classes (glee clubs, choruses, and the like), and approximately 1,000 are in the instrumental music classes. The total enrollment in the elementary school is slightly over 8,000 pupils.

The preceding accounts describe many excellent programs. However, they do not begin to cover adequately the significant work going on in the seventh and eighth grade classrooms visited. Of necessity visits were brief. Teachers and administrators are often unduly modest about their achievements and may have failed to call attention to programs of great interest to others.

Certain elements of good programs defy description. How can one report the enthusiasm and skill of a teacher who makes an exciting experience of a routine lesson? How can one relate the adept use of discussion to clarify a point, to bolster self-confidence, to lead into new fields? How can one describe the superb organization planned to provide a satisfying experience in a brief period? How can one give an account of the sincere concern for young people and the massive efforts to provide for their optimum development which were evident in the schools visited?

The suggestions for sharing good practices with the neighbors will serve one of their purposes if they stimulate teachers and administrators to look for other promising practices in their own programs. They will find them.

## AMBIENT TEACHERS: INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS IN SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADES

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Contemporary requirements for the education of the early adolescent are most inclusive. Teachers in the seventh and eighth grades are expected to guide the learning of pupils in desirable directions, discharging functions of integration, exploration, specialization, and supplementation. The integrative function is believed to require the offering of warm acceptance to the individual as well as introducing him to a common storehouse of knowledge. Exploration must awaken the pupil to many possibilities of existence while specialization asks for concentration of interest and proficiency in some discipline or skill. Supplementation recognizes the obligation for special assistance to both those with deficiencies and unusual talents. It would appear, therefore, that the variation among these functions calls for different classes of teacher behavior: (1) those which are effective and supportive in nature and in which individual pupils are singled out and behaved toward in a particular manner; and (2) those which are oriented toward achievement and which de-individualize instruction. We should expect that teachers who encompass these ranges in their behavior (ambient teachers) would be more effective in their instruction at the seventh and eighth grade levels. Similarly, it is predicted that those behaviors associated with each of the assigned functions are related to pupil productivity and morale.

### PROCEDURES AND RESULTS

The data presented were drawn from a study in 38 self-contained classrooms. The study involved the co-operation of 1,140 heterogeneously grouped pupils and their teachers. The range in teacher behavior was reported at the end of the school year by pupils responding to a

questionnaire which made possible the anonymity of the respondents. The instrument was administered under standard conditions by the investigators and called for pupil responses indicating the frequency of particular behaviors previously categorized by the investigators following their earlier visits to the classrooms. Each pupil indicated (1) the amount of self-initiated and required work he had undertaken during the school year; and (2) his feeling toward school and teacher. These indicators of pupil productivity and morale were similar to those established by Cogan.<sup>1</sup> Both productivity and morale are assumed to be measures of teacher effectiveness. Productivity permits exposure to necessary content and development of skill. Morale is desirable as an end, as a factor in the continuity of learning, and as a condition related to the susceptibility of pupils to the teachers's influence.

It was proposed that those teachers who exercised the following behaviors would be associated with pupils who attained greater productivity and higher morale:

#### *Integrative Behavior*

- a. Bargains with pupils
- b. Prevails upon influential pupils to motivate others toward work at hand
- c. Asks pupils to help in planning new work
- d. Encourages pupils with a friendly pat
- e. Bases report card on both work and attitude toward class
- f. Makes sure all learn common information
- g. Encourages pupils to discuss question posed by teacher
- h. Has class work in groups on projects which are part of the work being undertaken by the total class
- i. Encourages pupils to tell teacher about personal things undertaken outside of school

#### *Exploratory Behavior*

- a. Encourages pupils to teach the class
- b. Lets pupils act upon their own suggestions for new ways of doing things
- c. Encourages pupils to use their own ideas rather than restricting them to ideas in textbooks
- d. Encourages pupils to ask and answer their own questions

<sup>1</sup> Morris Cogan, "The Pupil Survey." Copyrighted 1953 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College. Not published.

- e. Stresses work for the joy it brings
- f. Helps pupils see why new work to be undertaken is important to them

#### *Specialistic Behavior*

- a. Tells pupils exactly how to do their homework
- b. Seats pupils in rows facing the teacher
- c. Requires pupils to obtain permission before speaking
- d. Bases report card on the pupil's achievement, e.g., test scores, papers, and reports
- e. Gives low grades
- f. Makes sure pupils learn facts
- g. Calls for recitation
- h. Encourages students to ask questions for teacher to answer
- i. Makes sure pupils complete assignments

#### *Supplemental Behavior*

- a. Gives attention to those who need special help
- b. Assigns extra work as a means for maintaining order
- c. Permits pupils to work in groups on projects which have nothing to do with the work of the class as a whole
- d. Assigns particular pupils to special committees
- e. Talks with pupils about things they are doing outside of school
- f. Assigns work which each pupil thinks he needs

Pupil scores of productivity and morale were ranked by classes. Each of the items listed under the four behaviors was taken independently and found by Chi Square Test to be related significantly, but to a greater or less extent, to one or both measures of effectiveness. Placement of the items under particular categories was in accordance with definition. Each item is theoretically supportable. Bargaining, for example, has been indicated by March and Simon<sup>2</sup> as an appeal to shared values of fairness which can result in productivity. Studies of social structure, such as those by Asch,<sup>3</sup> Leavitt,<sup>4</sup> Wispe,<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>2</sup> James G. March and Herbert A. Simon, *Organizations*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1958, p. 134.

<sup>3</sup> M. J. Asch, "Non-directive Teaching in Psychology: An Experimental Study," *Psychological Monographs*, Vol. 65, No. 4, 1951.

<sup>4</sup> H. J. Leavitt, "Some Effects of Certain Communication Patterns on Group Performance," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, XLVI (January, 1951), 38-50.

<sup>5</sup> L. G. Wispe, "Evaluating Section Teaching Methods in the Introductory Course," *Journal of Educational Research*, XLV (November, 1951), 161-86.

Fourienzos, Hutt, and Guetzkow,<sup>6</sup> have shown that communication patterns and rewards similar to the teachers' arrangement for seating, grading, talking, and the like as observed in the present study, are effective in social situations.

This is not to say that the practice implied by these items are always desirable in the instruction of boys and girls. Such a judgmental decision is another matter. The fact that specialistic behaviors are often unacceptable on grounds other than productivity is a case in point. Correlation coefficients between the scores of productivity and morale and the frequency of teachers' classroom behaviors as perceived by pupils were computed using the product moment formula. (Table 1)

**Table 1**  
**Correlations Between Classroom Scores of Productivity and Morale and Frequency of Teacher's Classroom Behaviors**

Behavior	Productivity		Morale	
	Self-initiated work	Required work	School	Teacher
Integrative.....	.453***	.544****	.361**	.423**
Exploratory.....	.294*	.501***	.433***	.660****
Specialistic.....	.294*	.480***	.291*	.256
Supplemental.....	.333**	.486***	.342**	.477***

Levels of significance:

no asterisk                  not significant

*	.1
**	.05
***	.01
****	.001

It was expected that those teachers who were seen as encompassing wide ranges of behavior in several categories would be associated with classes of higher productivity and morale. Analysis, as indicated by Table 2, tends to confirm this expectation.

#### CONCLUSION

The preceding results indicate that there are significant relationships between the range of teacher behavior exercised in the classroom and

<sup>6</sup>N. T. Fourienzos, M. L. Hutt, and Harold Guetzkow, "Measurement of Self-Oriented Needs in Discussion Groups," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, XLV (October, 1950), 682-90.

**Table 2**  
**Per cent of Ambient and Nonambient Teachers Found in Classes**  
**With Higher Productivity and Morale**

Behavior	Per cent of classes with higher amount of required work	Per cent of classes with higher amount of self-initiated work	Per cent of classes with more favor- able attitudes toward school	Per cent of classes with more favor- able attitudes toward teacher
Teachers in the upper quartile of three or four categories of behavior (ambient)-----	100	80	100	100 N-5
Teachers in the upper quartile of two categories of behavior (somewhat ambient)-----	80	80	60	60 N-5
Teachers in the upper quartile in one category of behavior (nonambient).	50	30	40	80 N-10

teacher effectiveness as measured by pupil productivity and morale. The findings support the contention that the effective teacher in the self-contained classroom pursues several goals at once discharging multiple functions. Noteworthy is the finding that those seventh and eighth grade teachers who maintain close supervision and emphasize achievement, e.g., show more specialistic behavior, are associated with higher productivity but not with high pupil morale.

## KINGS COUNTY STUDIES ITS SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADES

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The staffs of the schools in Kings County, under the direction of William Roush, Director of Education, studied all seventh and eighth grades in the county during the school year, 1958-59. The data obtained in making this study were identical in nature to those collected by the Bureau of Elementary Education in its survey of 55 schools throughout the state which was made by staff members of the Bureau visiting the schools.

The information contained in the report which follows provides a close-up of conditions in a typical rural county. The process used in obtaining these data focused attention on the educational problems of girls and boys in grades seven and eight. The data may assist educators and other responsible citizens of Kings County in their efforts to provide the best possible educational opportunities for the girls and boys in their care.

This article is confined to data related to facilities, the background of teachers, the organization of classes, and grouping, because of their special interest and significance. The final section of the article reports items of special interest.

### SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Enrollment figures for March 31, 1959, showed that 14 elementary school districts in Kings County enrolled 1,737 girls and boys in grades seven and eight. However, 15 schools were studied. The Reef-Sunset Union Elementary School District maintains grades seven and eight both at Avenal and at Kettleman City. These schools were studied separately.

For purposes of tabulation the schools were divided into three groups as follows:

Group A is comprised of 11 schools, three of which have combined seventh and eighth grades. One has an eighth grade, and combines

grade seven with grade six. Others have one or one and one-half classes at each grade level, with one school maintaining two classes in the seventh grade and one class in the eighth grade. The Kettleman City School is included in this group.

Group B has two schools, one of which has three classes in the seventh grade and three classes in the eighth grade. The other school has four classes in the seventh grade and three classes in the eighth grade. The Avenal School is included in this group.

Group C has two schools also. One school reports seven classes in the seventh grade and seven classes in the eighth grade. The other school reports seven classes in the seventh grade and eight classes in the eighth grade.

In all, 31.5 seventh grade classes and 31 eighth grade classes were studied.

#### WHAT SPECIAL FACILITIES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED?

The type and extent of the buildings and other facilities provided greatly influence the instructional program. Teachers in a school with no auditorium or multipurpose room find it difficult to schedule assemblies; and opportunities for pupils in grades seven and eight to speak before an audience and to assume related responsibilities are limited. The joy of browsing through the library shelves to locate just the right book is denied pupils in schools with no central library. Room for a variety of special activities encourages teachers to help girls and boys plan the individual projects and explore personal interests important to the development of young adolescents.

The special facilities provided in the schools of Kings County are reported in Table 1.

All of the small schools in Group A reported that they had special facilities. Enrollment in these schools ranges from 76 to 448 pupils. Four of the five music rooms, and the one and only swimming pool<sup>1</sup> are in the small schools in Group A. Small schools in Kings County do not necessarily have limited programs so far as facilities are concerned.

#### WHO TEACHES THE CHILDREN?

Educators differ on many aspects of the instructional program, but they all agree that well-trained teachers are absolutely essential to the success of programs designed to meet the needs of today's girls and boys.

<sup>1</sup> At Kettleman City in the Reef-Sunset Union Elementary School District.

**Table 1**  
**Special Facilities in Kings County Public Schools Maintaining**  
**Grades Seven and Eight**

Facility	Number of schools			
	Group A (11 schools)	Group B (2 schools)	Group C (2 schools)	Total
Sewing room.....	1			1
Auditorium.....		1	1	2
Audio-visual room.....	2			2
Student store.....	1			1
Dance area.....	1			1
Music room.....	4	1		5
Special reading room.....	1			1
Portable library.....	1			1
Library.....	2	2	2	6
Shop.....	1		2	3
Homemaking room.....	1		2	3
Swimming pool.....	1			1
Showers.....	2		1	3
Multipurpose room.....	10	2		12
Armory (for cadet use only)			1	1
Locker rooms for physical education.....			1	1

In Kings County, 80 teachers are employed to teach grades seven and eight. Table 2 gives information regarding the credentials they hold.

**Table 2**  
**Credentials Held by Teachers in Grades Seven and Eight,**  
**Kings County Public Schools**

Credential	Number	Per cent
General Elementary.....	36	45
Junior High.....	18	22.5
Special Secondary.....	8	10
General Secondary.....	6	7.5
Provisional General Elementary.....	12	15

Five of the eight special secondary credentials are in the field of music, and one each is in teaching the mentally retarded, in home-making, and in physical education.

Eighteen teachers (22.5 per cent) are teaching their first year in their present positions. This fact points up the need for comprehensive programs of in-service education and for adequate supervisory services.

Fifty-four (67.5 per cent) of all the teachers employed are men. The fact that men are customarily employed as principals and upper grade teachers in many of the small schools probably accounts for some of this imbalance. However, this tendency was also noted in the larger schools. Only two women were employed in one school with eight teachers in grades seven and eight. Girls and boys need contacts with both men and women.

#### HOW ARE THE CLASSES ORGANIZED FOR INSTRUCTION?

The following quotation<sup>2</sup> has a bearing on the patterns of organization reported for seventh and eighth grade classes in the schools of Kings County:

Current trends in the organization of the curriculum and teaching method point toward day-long continuity of pupil relationship with the same teacher. If modern concepts about curriculum and method are to have full expression in the school, it is imperative that organization for instruction be harmonized with curriculum philosophy.

Patterns of organization are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
**Organization of Instruction in Public Schools Having Seventh and Eighth Grades, Kings County**

Organization	Group A 11 schools	Group B 2 schools	Group C 2 schools
Entire day spent with one teacher.....	5	Eighth grade*	
All but one period spent with one teacher..	2	1	
Half-day spent with one teacher; rest of day departmentalized.....	4	Seventh grade*	2

\* These classes are in the same school.

The wide variety of organizational patterns which is apparent raises the following questions:

<sup>2</sup> Walter S. Monroe. *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952, p. 380.

Does the organization reflect the educational philosophy and the carefully considered judgment of the educators responsible for leadership?

Were all aspects of the children's welfare considered when plans were made?

Is the organizational pattern appropriate for the individual school?

Does the organization promote integrated learning, or does it tend to segment instruction?

Have data on the number of personal contacts made by teachers and pupils, and on class size been considered in relation to patterns of organization?

In the Group A schools, children receive instruction from one to five teachers daily; in Group B schools, the figure is from one to three; and in the Group C schools from five to six.

In Group A schools, teachers instruct 17 to 150 children each day; in Group B schools from 24 to 76; and in Group C schools from 70 to 260.

Class sizes range from 17 to 37 in Group A schools; 20 to 25 in Group B schools; and 33 to 36 in Group C schools.

For how many children can a teacher perform the guidance function which is so important to the wholesome growth of young adolescents?

To how many different adults and different ways of doing things can a girl or boy relate, during a school day, without adverse effects upon mental health.

The data on class size reveal that the largest and the smallest schools have the largest classes. A class of 25 pupils is generally accepted as desirable for good group interaction and for teacher attention to individual needs. Judged by this criterion, 18 of the 31.5 seventh grades (57 per cent) and 19 of the 31 eighth grades (61 per cent) are too large for efficient instruction.

Girls and boys in the seventh and eighth grade need to expand their experiences with their peers and with adults. Answers to questions about pupil tension and teacher load must be sought within the framework of the local situation. However, it seems unreasonable to ask girls and

boys to work with more than three or four different adults in positions of authority during a school day, or to expect a classroom teacher to know more than 25 children well enough to give them effective personal help and guidance.

#### WHAT FACTORS DETERMINE THE ASSIGNMENT OF PUPILS TO CLASSROOMS

Will this class help Jim build the confidence he needs? Will it aid Susan in developing new interests? What will challenge Jose to use his fine capacities? What will encourage Mary to make new friends, as well as improve her skills? All these questions and many more must be considered when pupils are assigned to their classrooms.

The following factors determined assignment to classes in the four schools which maintained more than one class in grades seven and eight.

School 1 has heterogeneous grouping in the seventh grade classes and classifies its eighth grade pupils by achievement.

School 2 uses heterogeneous placement.

School 3 employs scores on intelligence tests to arrange heterogeneous placement of pupils in the core periods. Classes in mathematics are organized in homogeneous groups according to achievement test scores and teachers' recommendations. Scores on intelligence tests and reading ability both serve as bases for grouping in science classes.

School 4 plans heterogeneous classes, taking care to place children of all ethnic groups in all classes. This school also clusters the upper and lower 6 per cent, as measured by the California Achievement Test.

J. Wayne Wrightstone in his useful bulletin, *Class Organization for Instruction* says:

No plan of grouping has yet been developed that makes teaching and learning in the classroom a simple matter. Any group of 30 or more pupils, no matter how alike they may seem, show individual differences sufficient to challenge the ingenuity of the most competent teacher. Classification cannot remove individual differences or the need for adapting instruction to individual differences. Even if all the factors were equal, the progress of individuals in the group would be equal only if each of them received identically the same motivation under identical circumstances with the same material in equal quantity.\*

\* J. Wayne Wrightstone, *Class Organization for Instruction*. What Research Says to the Teacher Series, No. 13. Washington, D. C.: Department of Classroom Teachers, American Educational Research Association, National Education Association, 1957, pp. 7-8.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE REPORT

The following items from the report on schools in Kings County were selected for publication because of their special interest and significance to schools in other areas of the state:

Concern for teaching the ways of democracy is strong in Kings County, as 13 of the schools studied have student body organizations.

Eleven schools offer special instruction in instrumental music, band, glee club or chorus. Seven of the small schools in Group A provide these opportunities.

Clubs sponsored by the schools include Teen-Age Club, 4-H Club, Stamp Club, Science Club, Eighth Grade Girls Club, and Model Airplane Club.

The Avenal and Kettleman City Schools in the Reef-Sunset Union Elementary School District, and the Corcoran Union Elementary School District maintain summer school classes for grades seven and eight. In the Hanford Elementary School District, seventh and eighth grade pupils may attend the summer school program planned for lower grades on referral by teachers, but no school credit is given.

Of the 15 schools studied, eight supplement the report card with one or two parent conferences each year. Parent conferences are encouraged, but are not held on a regular schedule in one other school.

Homemaking and shop are part of the regular program in the two large schools and in one of the small schools. Crafts, sewing, and budding and pruning are also offered in certain small schools.

Eleven of the schools offer an elective program to pupils in grades seven and eight. Chorus, band, and orchestra are offered in schools of all sizes. The larger schools add cadets, science, girls' shop, boys' cooking, arts and crafts, Spanish, drama, folk dancing, and special classes in physical education.

No special guidance services are provided in any of the schools in Group A or Group B. One Group C school has two part-time teacher counselors. In another Group C school guidance services are provided by the director of curriculum, the attendance officer, the psychologist, and the nurse.

Several schools schedule folk dancing as a noontime activity.

One school opens its library before school and keeps it open at noon-time.

In one school a mimeographed newsletter, "The Principal's Report," is sent out each month to parents of the girls and boys enrolled in grades seven and eight.

Three schools plan throughout the year for their annual spring trip to San Francisco or Sacramento. Fund raising, planning the itinerary, and discussing the many details involved in travel are engrossing activities for pupils in the eighth grade.

Factors that influence programs of in-service education and curriculum development in Kings County have been presented in this survey. In addition, interesting material for press releases and for informing boards of education and other responsible citizens of the strengths and needs of the schools has been made available. Other counties may wish to collect comparable data for the schools in their area. The detailed and comprehensive information made available by a survey of this sort is essential to the development of well-planned, constructive, and forward-looking educational programs.

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